

Sample letter/email to students and families

PER ORS 339.869 and OAR 581-021-0037, school districts must provide information related to opioid antagonists (naloxone) to the parent or guardian of each minor student. The information provided must at a minimum include:

(A) A description of short-acting opioid antagonists and their purpose;

(B) A statement regarding, in an emergency situation, the risks of administering to an individual a short-acting opioid antagonist and the risks of not administering to an individual a short-acting opioid antagonist;

(C) A statement identifying which schools in the district, if any, will have short-acting opioid antagonists, and the necessary medical supplies to administer short-acting opioid antagonists, on site and available for emergency situations; and

(D) A statement that a representative of a district may administer to a student a short-acting opioid antagonist in an emergency if the student appears to be unconscious and experiencing an opioid overdose.

Districts may use this letter/email to meet this requirement and help build awareness about the dangers of opioid use and the availability of naloxone in schools.

Suggested subject line: Important: What Parents Need to Know About Naloxone and Opioid Safety

Dear Students & Families,

Our school holds student wellbeing at the heart of the work that we do. We are writing to share concerns about fentanyl and opioid drugs. These drugs are harming people in our community. We hope this information will help protect students. This letter has valuable information including guidance on how to respond to an overdose and resource links.

Teen drug use has been decreasing over time. However, data shows that there has been an increase in overdoses, mainly due to illicit fentanyl in the drug market (NIDA, 2023). It is crucial to educate students and young people about substance use risks, including the potential of fentanyl in illicit pills and other substances. It is also important to raise awareness about opioid antagonists (such as naloxone).

What is an opioid? Opioids come from the opium poppy plant and include drugs like morphine, oxycodone, dilaudid, heroin, and fentanyl. They attach to receptors to block pain and increase pleasure. Overdose is a common risk associated with opioids and can be intentional or accidental. Fentanyl is a powerful opioid: a dose as small as a few grains of sand can make a person stop breathing within minutes.

Why do people use opioids? Opioids may be prescribed as pain medicine. Some young people try drugs because they are curious. Some people use drugs to avoid feeling difficult emotions. Opioids are addictive.

What is an opioid antagonist? Opioid antagonists are medications (naloxone is the most commonly known opioid antagonist) that can be delivered by a nasal spray or injection to quickly restore normal breathing for a person whose breathing has slowed down or stopped because of an overdose of fentanyl, prescription opioids or heroin. Naloxone onset occurs within 2-3 minutes and can last for 30-90 minutes. Sometimes a second dose of naloxone is necessary if symptoms of overdose return. Naloxone may be administered in emergency overdose situations and is safe for the person receiving the medication.

What can you do? Please talk about the dangers of fentanyl and availability of opioid agonists with your students and others you care about. Consider having naloxone available in your home for the quickest response during a medical emergency. Learn more about how to get naloxone and how to use it here: [Opioid Overdose Reversal Medications](#).

What is your school district doing? _____ (Insert District Name) provides comprehensive drug and alcohol education aligned with the [2023 Oregon Health Education Standards](#). In addition, we care deeply about the health and safety of every student in our school community. In alignment with school district policy, all schools will stock naloxone and necessary medical supplies. Staff may administer naloxone to any person suspected of experiencing an opioid overdose. Anytime naloxone is administered school staff will call 911 and notify the student's parents or guardian.

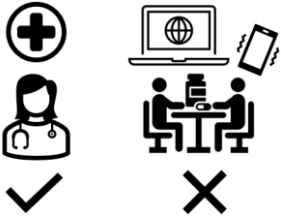



- In alignment with school district policy, some schools will stock naloxone and necessary medical supplies at the following schools: _____ (list schools). Staff may administer naloxone to any person suspected of experiencing an opioid overdose. Anytime naloxone is administered, school staff will call 911 and notify the student's parent or guardian.
- No schools will stock naloxone. School staff will contact 911 and notify student's parent or guardian if a student is experiencing a medical emergency.

We know these conversations can be hard. The best person to contact should you have questions is: _____
(Insert School Contact).

Warm regards,

(Insert Principal/School Superintendent/School Health Services Administrator)

Here is some information to share with students and families:

	<p>Pills from friends, and pills that you buy online or from social media, are not safe.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a pill comes from anyone other than a doctor or pharmacist, do not take it. It could be a fake pill. • Fake pills are not controlled. Each pill can have a different amount of drug. Every fake pill is a risk.
	<p>Pills that a doctor prescribes for one person should be used only by that person, exactly as instructed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not take pills that were prescribed for someone else or that you receive from friends or other sources. • Every body is different. A pill that is safe for one person can be harmful for someone else. • Any pill can be dangerous if it is taken wrongly, such as too much or too often.
	<p>Fake pills can look just like real pills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fake fentanyl-laced pill can be any color. They are often blue, greenish, or pale-colored pills. • Some fake pills have marks that look like real pills. Some are marked “M30,” “K9,” “215,” or “V48.” Fake pills may have other markings or no markings.
	<p>Schools and families want to help.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It’s ok to ask for help. • Students who tell us they are using drugs, or ask for help, will not be punished. • Students can speak with _____ (Insert staff: the school counselor, school social worker, school nurse, principal, SBHC staff), or another trusted adult. • If a student feels unsafe or knows someone who feels unsafe or is in emotional distress, they can call, text, or chat 988 and speak with a crisis counselor for free.

Here are actions to take if you witness an overdose in your home or community:

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. Contact IVPP.General@dhsosha.state.or.us.

RECOGNIZE: Know the signs of an opioid overdose:

- Pinpoint pupils
- Slow, shallow, or no breathing
- Gurgling or snoring
- Difficult to wake or can't wake
- Extreme drowsiness
- Cold, clammy skin
- Gray or blue skin, fingernails, or lips

RESPOND if an opioid overdose is suspected:

- ⊘ Administer an overdose reversal medication like naloxone* (if available) and call 911.
- ⊘ Try to keep the person awake and breathing.
- ⊘ Lay the person on their side to prevent choking.
- ⊘ Stay with the person until emergency assistance arrives.

You can learn more about how to get naloxone (Narcan) and how to use it by visiting the [Opioid Reversal Medications](#) page from Oregon Health Authority.

Here are some helpful websites:

- **Support for students and families**
 - [Youth Substance Use Disorder](#) treatment and recovery resources from Oregon Health Authority
 - [Oregon Family Support Network](#) connects, empowers, and educates families and their communities
 - [The New Drug Talk Oregon](#) provides parents with education and tools on connecting around fentanyl
 - [Oregon Recovery High Schools](#) provides safe, sober, and supportive education for youth in recovery
- **Information about opioids, fentanyl, and naloxone/Narcan rescue**
 - [April 2022 Community Threat Bulletin](#) from Oregon High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)
 - [Fentanyl Aware](#) Lane County public awareness campaign on fentanyl, overdose and naloxone
 - [Save Lives Oregon](#) learn more about naloxone, how to administer and access training guides
 - [Opioid overdose reversal medication](#) resources from Oregon Health Authority
 - [Fentanyl Overdose Deaths, Multnomah County 2018-2023](#), a report from Multnomah County Health Department
- **Helplines**
 - [Youthline](#) is a teen-to-teen crisis and help line. Call 1-877-968-8491 or text “teen2teen” to 839863.
 - [988 Lifeline](#). If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available 24/7. Call or text 988 or chat online at [988Lifeline.org](#). The 988 Lifeline answers calls, text and chats in English or Spanish, with interpretation services for more than 250 languages. People who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or prefer using American Sign Language can [connect directly with a trained 988 counselor in ASL](#).

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