

Empowering Alabama's Youth: COACH's K-12 Drug Prevention Program

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Overview



COACH team in action across Alabama



Goal

Empower Alabama's K-12 students with knowledge and skills to make informed, healthy decisions about substance use.

Topics

Drug safety

- Prescription medications and illegal substances

Opioids & Fentanyl

- Prescription and illegal

Alcohol

- Beer, wine, liquor

Vaping and Nicotine

- E-cigs, cigarettes, Zyn

Marijuana

- Vapes, gummies, hidden dangers

Gas station drugs

- Kratom, spice, THC, Delta-8-11, galaxy gas

Caffeine

- Energy drinks, recommended amounts

Formats



Digital Media

- 5–7-minute topic recordings
- 30–45-minute presentations
- Companion parent/caregiver interviews
- Social media awareness posts



Printed Media

- Topic-specific handouts
- Topic-specific activities
- Facilitator guides

Age-Appropriate Design



Elementary School (Grades K-5):

Aligned with Alabama State Standards

Interactive, story-based learning

Focus on safety, decision-making, and trusted adults



Middle School (Grades 6–8):

Interactive, experiential learning

Drug impairment simulation obstacle course

Discussion-based reflection



Junior High & High School (Grades 9–12):

Student-submitted questions

Narcan demonstration

Narcan kits available for administrators

K-5 Curriculum

Lesson Plan & Activity Demonstration: Candy or Not? Spot The Difference

Candy or Not? Spot the Difference

Time: 15-20 minutes

Grade Level: K-1

Topic: Candy vs Gas Station Drug Packaging

Standards: ELA21.1.14 Identify differences in informational text. MA19.1.15 Interpret simple picture graphs

Learning Objectives

- Students will identify differences between two informational images (real candy vs look-alike drug packaging)
- Students will interpret a simple picture graph showing class data on which package looks like candy or not

Activity 1: Spot the Difference (ELA)

Materials: two side by side color images of real candy packages vs look alike gas station packaging

Instructions:

- Look carefully at both pictures.
- Circle or mark things that look different (color shades, warning labels, names, or symbols).
- Discuss with your classmates:
 - What makes this one look like candy?
 - What clues tell you this might not be safe to eat?
 - Who could you ask if you're not sure?

****Teacher Notes:**** Emphasize that some dangerous products copy candy packaging. Students should always ask a trusted adult before eating anything not given by a parent or teacher.

Sample images:



Activity 2: Picture Graph (Math)

Materials: a simple chart labeled:

Package Type	How Many Students Think It's Candy
Real Candy	5 candy icons
Look-Alike Drug	2 candy icons

- Each student places a sticker or draws a candy icon under the package they think looks most like candy.
- Count together which column has more candies.
- Discuss:
 - Which one had more?
 - How can we tell from the picture graph?

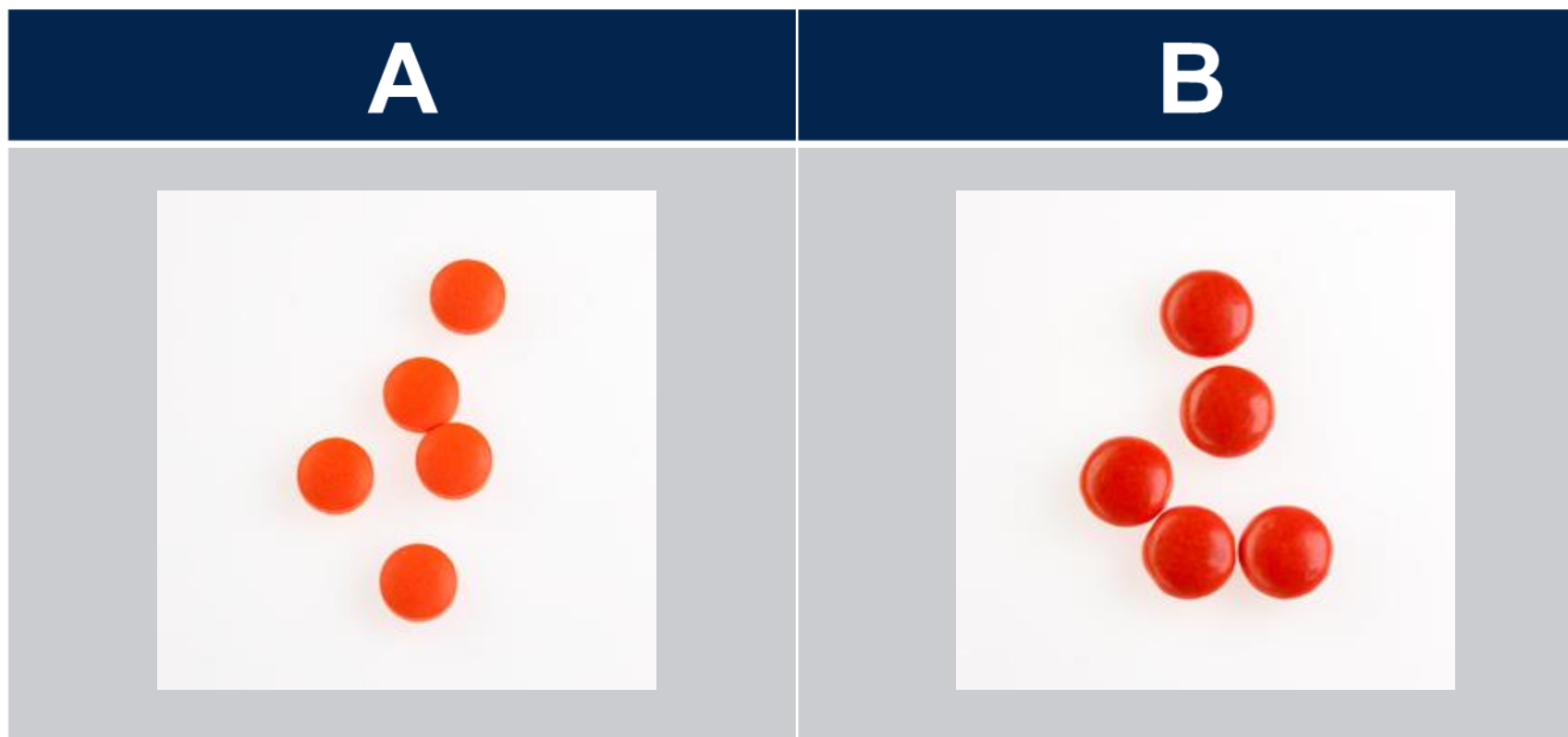
****Extension:**** Have students draw their own safe candy wrapper with a big label "Safe Treat" or "Ask First!",

Teacher Discussion Points

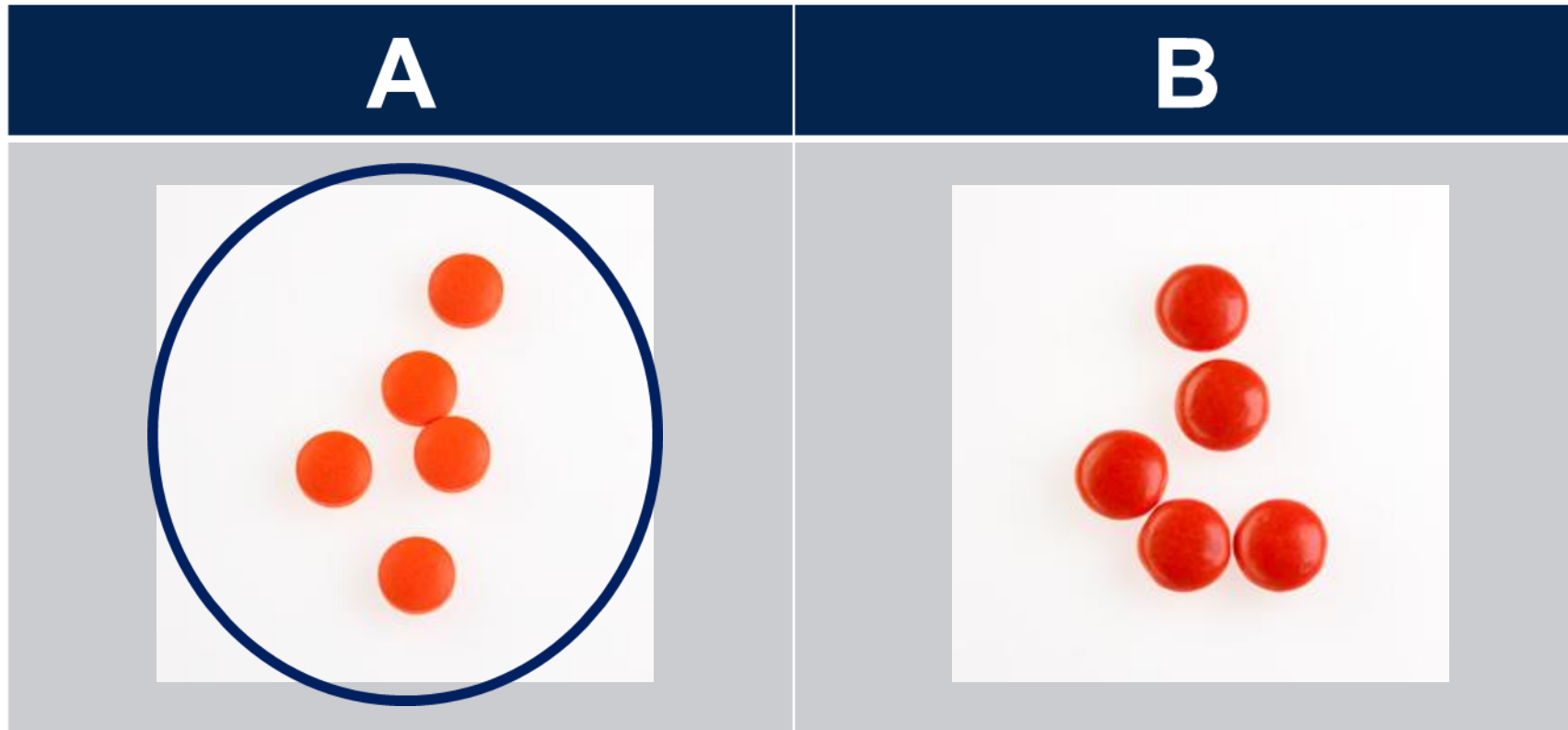
- Why it's important to read labels or ask an adult.
- How marketing can be confusing.
- Reinforce safety: "If you're not sure, don't eat it!"

Danger or Safe?

Which is Safe?



Option A = Reese's Pieces



Danger or Safe?

Which is Safe?

A



B



Option B = Smarties

A



B



Danger or Safe?

Which is Safe?

A



B



A = Gummy Bear Candy

A



B



Lesson Plan & Activity Example: Freeze Dance

Freeze Dance: Safe or Not?

Time: 10-15 minutes

Grade Level: 2-3

Topic: Identify effects of unsafe substances

Standards: ELA21.2.24 / ELA21.3.22 Identify ideas in simple informational text. Students interpret pictures and categorize items as safe vs. unsafe.

Learning Objectives

- Students will recognize safe items used every day (water, fruit, school supplies, etc.)
- Students will identify unsafe or harmful items (cleaning products, vapes, alcohol, unknown pills, gasoline, etc.)
- Students will practice self-control and quick decision-making during the freeze dance game.

Slide 1 – Title

SAFE OR NOT? Freeze Dance

Dance when you see a *safe* item.

Freeze when you see an *unsafe* item

Music plays during activity (teacher can pick any school-safe song).

Slide 2 – How to Play

- When the music plays → **Dance**
- When you see a picture →
 - **Safe item = Keep dancing**
 - **Unsafe item = Freeze like a statue!**
- When you freeze, say:
“**Stop and Tell a Trusted Adult!**”

Slides 3–4 – Practice Round

Slide 3: Picture of an **Apple** → Students *keep dancing*

Slide 4: Picture of **Cleaning Spray Bottle** → Students *freeze* + say the line

Slide	Picture	Action
5	Water Bottle	Keep Dancing
6	Vape / E-cig	Freeze
7	Backpack	Keep Dancing
8	Alcohol Bottle	Freeze
9	Toothbrush	Keep Dancing
10	Unlabeled Pill / Tablet	Freeze
11	Milk Carton	Keep Dancing
12	Cleaning Bleach Bottle	Freeze
13	Band-Aid Box	Keep Dancing
14	Gasoline Can	Freeze
15	Fruit	Keep Dancing
16	“Candy” Packaging Imitation (e.g., <i>Stoney Patch</i>)	Freeze

Slide 17 – Trusted Adults

If you see something unsafe, tell:

- Parent
- Adult at my school
 - Teacher
 - School Nurse
 - Coach
 - Counselor
 - School Resource Officer
- Grown-up at home

Slide 18 – Quick Reflection

Turn and talk:

What is one way you can stay safe?

Slide 19 – Great job making safe choices today!



Lesson Plan & Activity Example: Your Shield

Time: 25–30 minutes

Grades 2-3

Objective:

Students will identify internal and external protective factors and explain how these supports help them resist pressure or unsafe choices.

Anchor Standard 2: Influences on Health Behaviors — Students will analyze influences of family, peers, culture, media, etc.

- **3.2.1a** Identify ways that peers can influence healthy and unhealthy behaviors.

Anchor Standard 4: Interpersonal Communication Skills —

- **3.4.4** State effective refusal skills to enhance health.

Anchor Standard 5: Decision-Making Skills —

- **3.5.1** Discuss the consequences of possible choices when making a health decision.

Materials:

- Pre-printed shield template
- Crayons / markers

Shield Sections (6):

1. **My Support Team (family & friends)**
2. **Activities/Hobbies That Keep Me Strong**
3. **Reasons I Say No**
4. **What I Say When Someone Pressures Me**
("No thanks," "I don't want to get hurt," "That's not for kids," etc.)
5. **Trusted Adults**
6. **Things I Value (health, kindness, goals)**

Steps:

1. Introduction (3 minutes)

Explain:

"A shield protects us from danger. We all have things in our lives that help protect us from unsafe choices. Today, you'll fill your shield with the things that keep YOU strong."

2. Guided Example (4 minutes)

Draw or write sample ideas in each section.

Model a refusal line such as:

"No thanks. I want to stay safe."

3. Student Work Time (12–15 minutes)

Students write or draw one idea per section.

Prompts:

- "Who has your back?"
- "What activities help keep you focused and healthy?"
- "Why do you choose to say no to unsafe things?"
- "What could you say if someone tries to pressure you?"
- "What do you value about yourself?"

4. Partner Share (3–5 minutes)

Students compare shields and discuss:

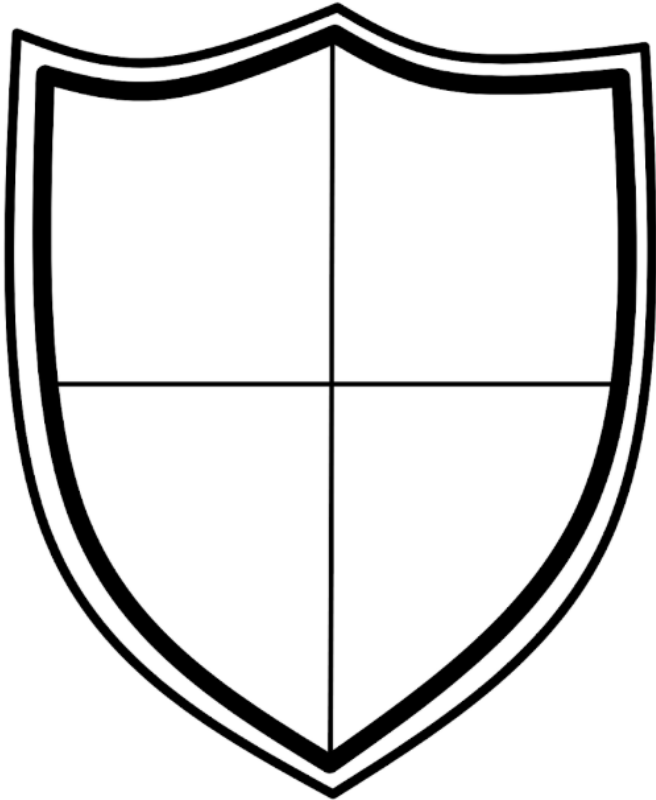
"What part of your shield helps you the most? Why?"

5. Closure (2–3 minutes)

"We all have supports that help us stay strong. Your shield shows your power to make healthy choices."

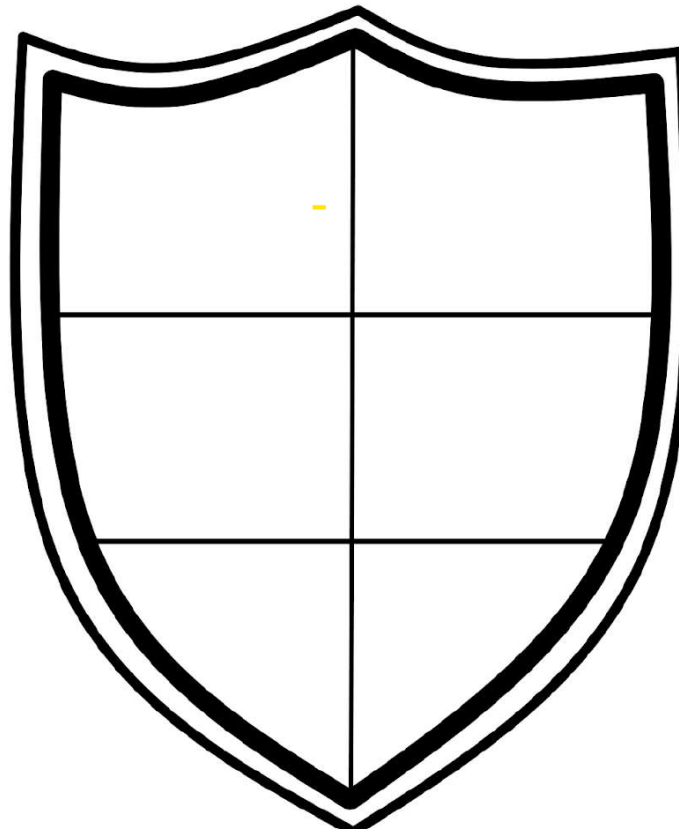
Different Versions of Shield based on Grade Levels

MY STRONG SHIELD



K-1st Grade—broader Categories

MY STRONG SHIELD



2nd-3rd Grade—more advanced, deeper defined prompts

Grades 4 -5: Design your own unique Shield

Create Shields (15–18 minutes)

Students design a unique shield shape (traditional, modern, creative), then fill it with drawings, symbols, and short notes.

Encourage depth:

- “How does this hobby protect you?”
- “Which personal values guide your choices?”
- “What could you say if someone tries to pressure you?”

6-12 Curriculum

Topic-specific Handout & Activity Examples

Vaping



Vapes are full of chemicals



Vaping can cause permanent lung damage



Vapes and Cigarettes are BOTH harmful



Vaping Among Teens

- 1 in 10 high school students currently vape
- 25% of teens use e-cigarettes daily
- Vaping is now the most common form of tobacco use in youth

What's in a Vape?

- Nicotine – highly addictive
- Propylene Glycol – irritates lungs
- Formaldehyde – used in embalming
- Heavy Metals – like lead and nickel
- Diacetyl – linked to serious lung disease

You never know exactly what's inside a vape. Some have even been found to contain fentanyl.

What is EVALI?

E-cigarette or Vaping-Associated Lung Injury

Symptoms:

- Coughing
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath

 Lung scans of those with EVALI show severe inflammation and damage.

How Nicotine Affects Your Body

- Disrupts dopamine (your brain's reward system)
- Increases blood pressure
- Can lead to:
 - Lung disease
 - Kidney disease
 - Liver cancer
 - Diabetes
 - Appetite changes

Vaping Myths – BUSTED

Myth: "Vaping is safer than smoking"
→ Reality: Vaping still exposes you to toxic chemicals.

Myth: "It doesn't have much nicotine"
→ Reality: Most vapes, even "light" ones, contain a lot of nicotine.

Myth: "Secondhand vape smoke is harmless"
→ Reality: It can harm bystanders, especially kids and those with health conditions.


Stay Safe

- Don't vape. Your lungs and brain are still developing.
- Be aware that peer pressure and flavored marketing target young users.
- Help friends quit—support each other in staying healthy.

Name: _____

Vaping Spot the Myth

Instructions: Read each of the statements below. Decide whether each one is a Fact  or a Myth . Circle your answer.

- Vaping is just water vapor, so it's harmless.
 Fact  Myth
- Some vapes contain as much nicotine as an entire pack of cigarettes.
 Fact  Myth
- You can get addicted to vaping even if you only try it a few times.
 Fact  Myth
- Flavored vape products are safe because they taste good.
 Fact  Myth
- Vaping doesn't affect your lungs because it doesn't burn tobacco.
 Fact  Myth
- Secondhand vapor from e-cigarettes is safe for people nearby.
 Fact  Myth
- You must be 21 to legally buy vapes in the U.S.
 Fact  Myth

Vaping Spot the Myth

ANSWER KEY

Instructions: Read each of the statements below. Decide whether each one is a Fact ☒ or a Myth ☐. Circle your answer.

1. Vaping is just water vapor, so it's harmless.

☒ Fact ☒ Myth

2. Some vapes contain as much nicotine as an entire pack of cigarettes.

☒ Fact ☐ Myth

3. You can get addicted to vaping even if you only try it a few times.

☒ Fact ☐ Myth

4. Flavored vape products are safe because they taste good.

☒ Fact ☒ Myth

5. Vaping doesn't affect your lungs because it doesn't burn tobacco.

☒ Fact ☒ Myth

6. Secondhand vapor from e-cigarettes is safe for people nearby.


☒ Fact ☒ Myth

7. You must be 21 to legally buy vapes in the U.S.


☒ Fact ☐ Myth

Topic Recordings

- Drug Safety clip here



- take more medication than is prescribed
- go in someone else's medicine cabinets
- share prescription medications
- take unlabeled drugs or medications
- take unwrapped candy or candy from an unknown source




Marijuana damages brain development

The brain doesn't finish developing until age 26

Young cannabis users are at increased risk for....

- Being diagnosed with a substance use disorder
- Developing schizophrenia in adulthood



Topic Recordings Examples continued

Mims- video here (Middle School – 3-minute version)

Obstacle Course



Naloxone (NARCAN) Demonstration

NARCAN:
a medication that
can reverse an
opioid overdose



HOW TO USE

 **NARCAN[®]**
NASAL SPRAY

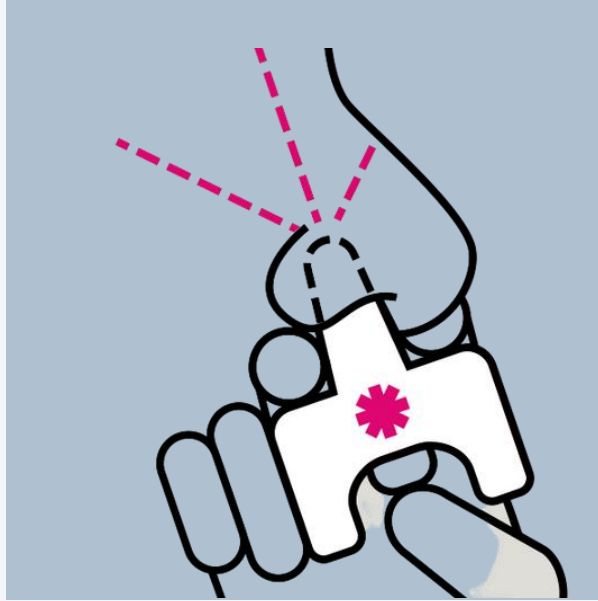


What to do in an opioid emergency



LAY

- Check for slowed breathing or unresponsiveness.
- Lay the person on their back and tilt the head up.



SPRAY

- Insert device into either nostril and press plunger firmly



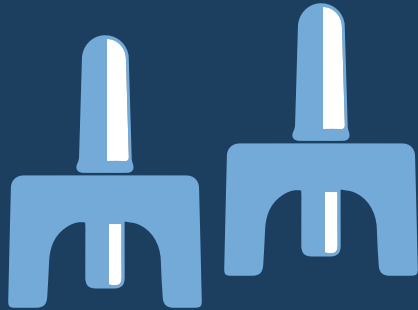
STAY

- Call 911 immediately and continue to administer doses as needed.

REMEMBER



**Wears off in 30-90
minutes**



**It's ok to give more
than 1 dose**



**It only works on
opioid overdoses**



**If the person wakes up, they
might be confused**



You can save a life

Facilitator Guide: Conversation Starters

Sample Script

Medication vs Drug

- Over-the-counter (OTC) medications
- Prescription medications
- Illegal (banned) drugs
- Vaping
- Alcohol
- Energy Drinks
- "Gas Station" drugs

Key Talking Points:

- OTC meds: Tylenol, ibuprofen, safe if used as directed
- Prescription meds: doctor-ordered, not to be shared
- Illicit drugs: heroin, methamphetamine, cocaine, fentanyl
- Vaping dangers: hidden substances like fentanyl
- Alcohol: legal ≠ safe; risks increase with age/mixing
- Energy drinks: high caffeine; more than soda

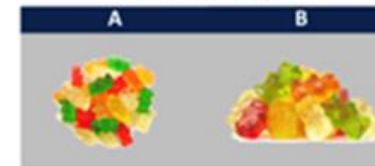
Presenter Commentary Examples:

- "Can anyone give an example of an over-the-counter medication you've seen at home?"
 - Pause and engage responses - this makes it interactive and sets a safe tone for discussion.
- "Some people think vaping is safe, but we know it can contain harmful drugs like fentanyl — and you can't tell just by looking at it."
 - Use this to introduce the seriousness of hidden substances.

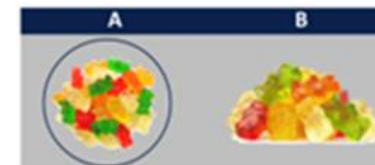
Sample Script

Gummy bear candy or dangerous illegal gummies?

Which is the real candy?



A = Gummy bear candy



Key Talking Points:

- Drug dealers disguise drugs to look like candy
- Example: real vs. drug-laced gummy bears
- Interactive activity: ask students to guess
- Visual learning: reveal correct answer on next slide
- Builds awareness without fear

Presenter Commentary Examples:

- "Raise your hand — who thinks these are the real gummy bears? Let's find out together."
- "Dealers want these to look like treats. That's what makes them so dangerous — they're tricky on purpose."

Parents, Caregivers, and Community Members

Resources

- Hornsby video clip

Emerging Drugs of Abuse

What you need to know

Common Emerging Drugs (2024–2025 Trends)



1

Xylazine ("Tranq")

- Animal sedative often mixed with fentanyl.
- Causes severe sedation, skin ulcers, and risk of fatal overdose.
- Not reversed by naloxone.
- Mixed into street opioids like fentanyl/heroin. Found as a white or brown powder. May be injected, snorted, or smoked.

2

Nitazenes

- Synthetic opioids up to 40x stronger than fentanyl.
- Causes respiratory depression, drowsiness, euphoria, and nausea.
- Reversed by naloxone.
- Often found in counterfeit pills (e.g., fake oxycodone, Xanax). Can be in powder form, pills, or mixed with fentanyl.

3

Synthetic Cannabinoids ("Spice", "K2")

- Lab-made chemicals that mimic THC.
- Can cause agitation, paranoia, hallucinations, seizures, nausea, fast heart rate, risk of kidney damage or heart attack.
- Not reversed by naloxone.
- Dried plant material sprayed with chemicals. Often smoked; sold as incense or "herbal blends". Packaged in colorful, branded foil packets.

4

Synthetic Cathinones ("Bath Salts")

- Stimulants that mimic cocaine or MDMA.
- May cause paranoia, hallucinations, violent behavior, high body temperature or seizures.
- Not reversed by naloxone.
- Usually a white or off-white powder. Snorted, swallowed, smoked, or injected. Often mislabeled as "plant food" or "not for human consumption".

5

Tianeptine ("Gas Station Heroin")

- Atypical antidepressant sold as a supplement; acts on opioid receptors at high doses.
- Symptoms include irritability, drowsiness, high blood pressure, sweating, and confusion.
- Reversed by naloxone.
- Found as capsules, tablets, or powders. Sold in gas stations or online as a "dietary supplement" or brain boosters.

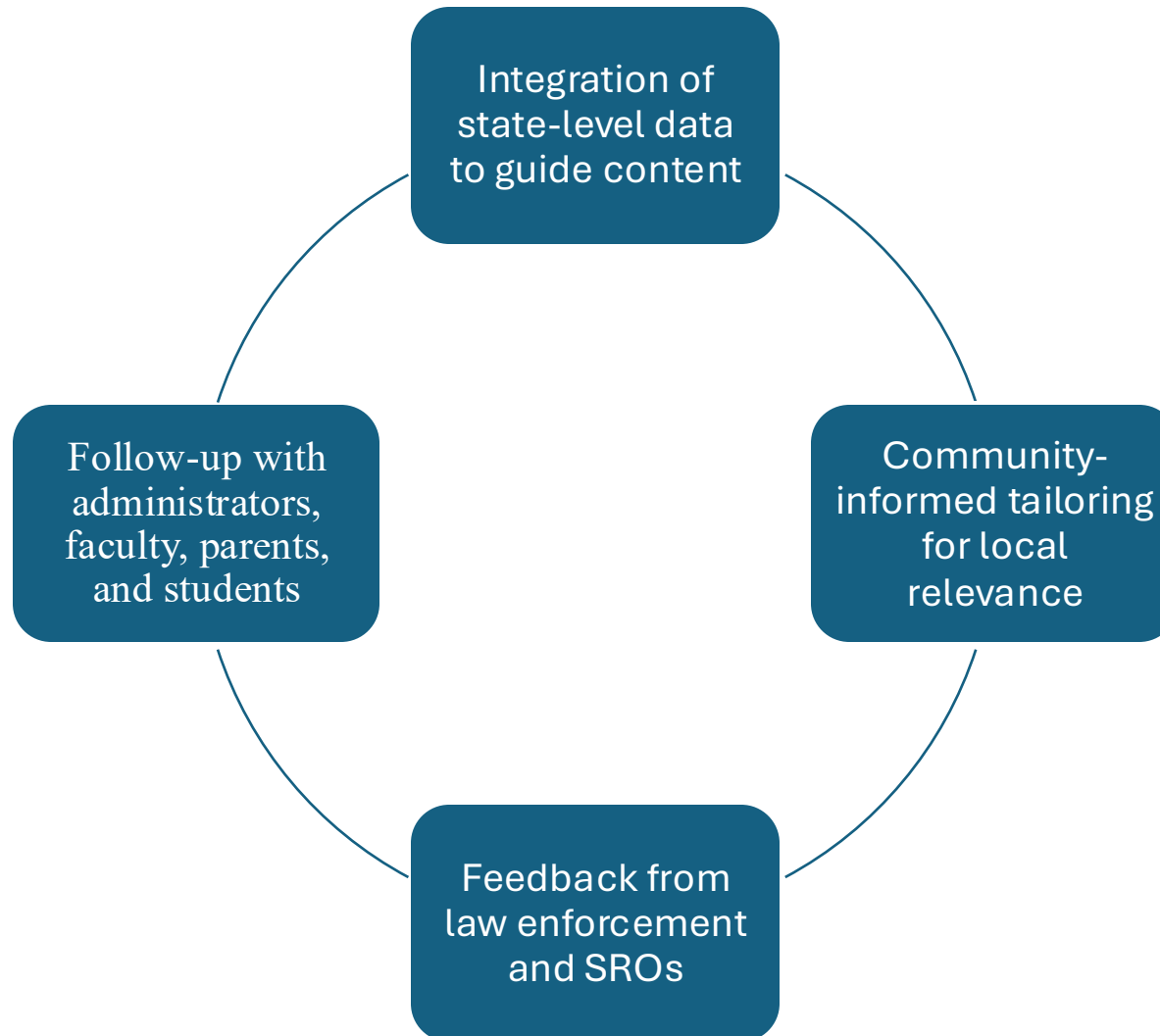
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Carfentanil

- Ultra potent synthetic opioid (approved for veterinary use only, e.g., large animals like elephants).
- 100x more potent than fentanyl.
- Reversed by naloxone but multiple doses are typically required.
- Powder, mixed with heroin or fentanyl. Often indistinguishable by appearance alone.

Impact and Accessibility

Impact Tracking & Feedback



Experience

Category	Number
Partner schools- onsite delivery	20
Presentations delivered	64
K-12 students impacted	20,000+

Program Materials Accessibility

Demonstrate Website- insert link

Contact Information

Email coach@auburn.edu

Visit auburncoach.org



Demonstrations

Please feel free to stop by and participate in any of the demonstration stations set up in the clinic session area.

