

Exploring Drug Use Patterns and the Emergence of Fentanyl Among Individuals 21 and Younger in Pierce County

Insights From a Summer Internship

Abstract

This project presents findings from data gathered during a summer internship program from June 5th to August 25th, aimed at investigating drug use trends among those 21 and younger in Pierce County. The primary objective was to obtain a better understanding of the patterns of drug use, with a particular emphasis on the increasing incidence of fentanyl-related cases. The research involves the collection and analysis of data from various sources, including a collection of cases documented by PCME that fit my criteria, and documentation of overdose cases collected throughout the duration of the internship. Cases documented in the past year reveal a surge in fentanyl use among both the general and youth population in Pierce County, highlighting the urgent need for targeted prevention and intervention strategies. This finding would in turn suggest the increasing risk of fentanyl exposure and its associated consequences among the younger population. My project will also highlight the multifaceted nature of drug use, emphasizing the importance of considering socioeconomic factors, peer influences, and mental health issues when developing preventive measures. My data emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach to address this critical public health concern, including education and outreach programs, early intervention strategies, and increased access to treatment services tailored to the needs of youth in Pierce County.