

AUGUST 21

NATIONAL FENTANYL PREVENTION & AWARENESS DAY

INTERNATIONAL PARTNER KIT

PREVENTION WITHOUT BORDERS

The Drug Threat Crosses Borders. Prevention Should Too.

ONE DATE. MANY COUNTRIES. ONE SHARED PURPOSE.

A practical starter kit for governments, agencies, law enforcement, public health, educators, families, recovery communities and community partners who want to recognize August 21 and build prevention efforts over time.

Presented by Facing Fentanyl

facingfentanylnow.org

1. The International Invitation

National Fentanyl Prevention and Awareness Day began as a family-led movement in the United States to turn loss into prevention. August 21 brings families, communities, public health, law enforcement, educators and partners together to raise awareness of a rapidly changing illicit drug supply, remember lives lost and give people practical information that can save lives.

We invite countries around the world to recognize August 21 and make the day their own. The goal is not to duplicate an American program. The goal is to create a shared international date for prevention, poisoning awareness, remembrance and action - adapted to each country's culture, drug environment and community needs.

THE INTERNATIONAL IDEA

One date. Many nations. Local action. Shared purpose: understand the risk, prevent the poisoning, protect the next life.

What participation can look like

- Issue a national, regional, local or agency proclamation.
- Share one public prevention message on August 21.
- Bring government, health, law enforcement, education, families and recovery voices together.
- Hold a remembrance, education or community awareness event.
- Use August 21 to launch or strengthen year-round prevention work.

2. Why August 21?

A prevention day centered on poisoning risk

August 21 focuses on preventing poisonings connected to today's illicit and unregulated drug supply. Fentanyl and other potent synthetic substances may be present in pills, powders or other drugs without a person's knowledge. Prevention begins with helping people understand that risk before exposure occurs.

A bridge to August 31

August 21 is designed to complement, not compete with, International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31. August 21 opens the conversation with prevention and poisoning awareness. August 31 continues the broader global conversation around overdose awareness, remembrance, stigma reduction and action.

A PREVENTION GATEWAY INTO A GLOBAL OBSERVANCE

August 21 asks: How do we prevent the next poisoning? August 31 continues the global conversation around overdose awareness and remembrance.

The name of the drug may change. The need to understand the supply does not.

3. How Your Country Can Begin

START WITH ONE ACTION. BUILD FROM THERE.

Participation does not require a large government program or major budget. A country can begin with official recognition, bring a few committed partners together, share one clear prevention message and grow the effort over time.

1. Recognize the Day

Begin with an August 21 proclamation or official statement. Recognition gives communities a common date and a reason to act.

2. Build a Small Partnership

Bring together people already working in prevention, safety, health and community response. You do not need to create a new organization.

3. Include Lived Experience

Invite impacted families and people in recovery. Their experience can make prevention messaging credible, practical and human.

4. Start Simple on August 21

Your first observance can be modest. The goal is participation, not perfection.

5. Connect With Facing Fentanyl

We can share sample proclamation language, campaign messaging, educational materials, event ideas and examples from U.S. communities.

A simple growth path

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Recognize + Share	Partner + Educate	Expand + Mobilize

4. Sample Proclamation / Official Recognition

This sample can be adapted for a country, ministry, province, state, city, agency, university or community organization. Replace bracketed language with local terminology and facts.

WHY START WITH A PROCLAMATION?

A proclamation creates an official moment for public health, law enforcement, education, recovery communities, families and local leaders to share one prevention message - without requiring a large program or budget.

Sample language

WHEREAS, communities around the world are confronting a rapidly changing illicit and unregulated drug supply that may contain fentanyl and other potent synthetic substances;

WHEREAS, people may be exposed to dangerous substances without knowing what is present, creating a need for clear prevention and poisoning-awareness messages;

WHEREAS, education, prevention, public health, law enforcement, families, people in recovery and community partners all have a role in protecting lives;

WHEREAS, August 21 provides a shared opportunity to raise awareness, remember lives lost, strengthen prevention and encourage communities to take action;

NOW, THEREFORE, [OFFICIAL / GOVERNMENT / ORGANIZATION] recognizes August 21 as Fentanyl Prevention and Awareness Day and encourages individuals, families, agencies, schools, health organizations, recovery communities and community partners to participate in prevention and awareness activities.

Optional international language: "We join partners around the world in recognizing August 21 as a shared day of prevention, poisoning awareness, remembrance and action."

5. Who Should Be at the Table?

A country does not need every sector represented on day one. Start with the partners already doing the work and build from there.

- Government / ministries
- Public health
- Law enforcement
- Customs and border agencies
- Schools and universities
- Prevention organizations
- Treatment and recovery organizations
- Families impacted by poisoning
- People in recovery
- First responders
- Community and faith organizations
- Media and communications partners

6. Including Families and People in Recovery

Families

Families bring the human reality of poisoning into prevention. Their stories help communities understand that behind every statistic is a person, a family and a life that mattered. Family participation can include remembrance, prevention messages, media interviews, educational events and advisory roles.

People in recovery

People in recovery bring invaluable insight into changing drug markets, risk, addiction, treatment, recovery and the messages people are most likely to hear and trust. Recovery voices can help make prevention practical and credible.

LIVED EXPERIENCE IS PART OF PREVENTION.

Families and people in recovery should not sit outside prevention. Their experience can help shape the messages, partnerships and actions that communities use to save lives.

Good practice for lived-experience participation

- Invite participation - do not pressure people to share personal stories.
- Allow participants to choose how much of their experience they want to disclose.
- Pair lived experience with practical prevention information and available resources.
- Avoid sensationalizing loss or recovery.
- Include lived-experience voices in planning, not only on the event stage.

7. First-Year August 21 Ideas

A first observance can be simple. Countries can select one or more activities that fit local needs and resources.

Official recognition: Proclamation, ministry statement, agency statement or legislative recognition.

Public message: Government or agency social media post, press release or video statement.

Education: School, university, workplace or community prevention materials.

Community conversation: Panel or roundtable including health, law enforcement, families and recovery voices.

Remembrance: Moment of silence, memorial display, names or photographs shared with permission.

Public safety: Training or awareness for first responders, schools, campuses or community organizations.

Media: Interview, op-ed, news briefing or public-service announcement.

8. Core Messaging

Countries should adapt wording to local conditions, laws, language and drug trends. The following messages provide a shared August 21 foundation.

PRIMARY INTERNATIONAL LINE

The Drug Threat Crosses Borders. Prevention Should Too.

PARTICIPATION LINE

One Date. Many Countries. One Shared Purpose.

PREVENTION LINE

Understand the risk. Prevent the poisoning. Protect the next life.

SUPPLY LINE

The name of the drug may change. The need to understand the supply does not.

ACTION LINE

Recognize August 21. Share the message. Build from there.

LIVED-EXPERIENCE LINE

Every story can carry prevention forward.

Sample social media post

On August 21, we join communities working to prevent drug poisonings and increase awareness of a rapidly changing illicit drug supply. Prevention begins with understanding risk, sharing credible information and bringing communities together. We recognize August 21 as Fentanyl Prevention and Awareness Day and join a growing international movement committed to protecting lives. #August21 #FacingFentanyl

Sample short statement for an official

"Our country is joining August 21 because prevention cannot stop at borders. We want our communities to understand the changing drug supply, recognize poisoning risk and know that prevention, public health, law enforcement, families and recovery voices all have a role in saving lives."

9. Sample Media Announcement

Headline

[COUNTRY / AGENCY] Joins August 21 Fentanyl Prevention and Awareness Day

Opening paragraph

[CITY, COUNTRY] - [ORGANIZATION / AGENCY] announced today that it will recognize August 21 as Fentanyl Prevention and Awareness Day, joining a growing prevention movement focused on poisoning awareness, education, remembrance and community action.

Suggested second paragraph

The observance emphasizes the risks associated with a rapidly changing illicit and unregulated drug supply and encourages communities to work across public health, law enforcement, education, recovery and family networks to prevent avoidable deaths.

Suggested quote

"The drug threat crosses borders, and prevention should too. August 21 gives us a shared date to educate, remember and act while allowing every country to shape the message around its own communities and needs."

10. What Facing Fentanyl Can Provide

International partners do not have to start from zero. Facing Fentanyl can support early planning and share adaptable resources, examples and lessons learned from August 21 activities in the United States.

- Sample proclamation language
- International overview and talking points
- Social media and campaign messaging
- Educational and awareness materials
- Event-planning ideas
- Guidance for family participation
- Guidance for recovery-community participation
- Examples from U.S. communities
- Introductions to appropriate U.S. prevention partners when helpful
- Support developing a first-year August 21 observance

THE FIRST STEP CAN BE SIMPLE.

Recognize August 21. Bring people together. Share the message. Prevent the next poisoning. Then connect with us, and we will help you build from there.

International partner interest

Ready to Get Started?

We would love to connect with you and share what we have learned from building National Fentanyl Prevention and Awareness Day in the United States. Our team can help you develop an August 21 observance that reflects your country, community, and needs while sharing practical ideas and resources that can help make your event successful.

When you email us, please include your **country, organization or agency, your role, who you hope to involve, what type of August 21 recognition or event you are considering, and any questions or support you may need.** This will help us come prepared with the right resources, ideas, and next steps for your conversation.

Email us at andrea@voicesforawareness.com to get started. Together, we can build August 21 across borders.

Participation interests

- ☐ National recognition / proclamation
- ☐ Government agency participation
- ☐ Law enforcement / customs / border participation
- ☐ Public health
- ☐ Family organization
- ☐ Recovery organization
- ☐ Education / university

- ☐ Community event
- ☐ Media / public awareness
- ☐ Not sure yet - help us get started

AUGUST 21

PREVENTION WITHOUT BORDERS

**THE NAME OF THE DRUG MAY CHANGE.
THE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE SUPPLY DOES NOT.**

Recognize the day. Share the message. Prevent the next poisoning.

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