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OFFICE OF
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— Stronger, Safer Florida —

Attorney General Ashley Moody News Release

As Millions Head Back to School, AG Moody Warns Students About Counterfeit Pills and Illicit Vapes Containing Fentanyl



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is warning parents about an alarming increase in teen drug overdoses. A [study from the New England Journal of Medicine](#) revealed that about 22 teens die each week nationwide to drug overdoses—about the same number of students in a high-school class. According to the report, drug overdoses and poisonings are now the third-leading cause of pediatric deaths in the country. [Earlier this month](#), Attorney General Moody hosted a Thin Line Tribute thanking school resource deputies for their front-line efforts and issued a warning about laced vapes and other illicit substances.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “As millions of children prepare to head back to school, I’m urging parents to speak to their kids about the dangers of using drugs. While Florida leads the nation in fentanyl interdiction efforts and reports are showing an overall statewide decrease in overdose deaths, there are concerning nationwide trends involving youth overdosing and dying from substance abuse. Please emphasize the importance of never using illicit substances like counterfeit pills or illicit vapes—they could contain fentanyl, and just one pill can kill.”

The [New England Journal of Medicine](#) reported that after more than a decade of remaining relatively stable, overdose deaths among 14- to 18-year-olds more than doubled. Since then, the issue has intensified, with the national teen overdose rate climbing to 22 deaths a week.

Fentanyl is now involved in at least 75% of adolescent overdose deaths.

As millions of kids across the state head back to school, Attorney General Moody is urging parents to speak to their children about the dangers of drug use. In 2019, Attorney General Moody launched [Dose of Reality Florida](#), a statewide resource designed to increase public awareness, education and prevention efforts to address drug misuse and save lives.

Attorney General Moody offers the following tips for parents to encourage open communication with their children:

- Keep it age appropriate—a drug talk with a child in middle school will be quite different from one with a high schooler or college student;
- Talk about how dangerous addiction is and how just one pill can kill;
- Reassure children that they are free to talk about the subject at home because keeping an open conversation is a healthy way to build trust; and
- Establish clear rules and consequences for children.

Additional informational material on Dose of Reality Florida for parents includes:

- [Drug Enforcement Administration resources for parents, educators and caregivers](#);
- [Techniques for communicating effectively with your child about drugs](#);
- [Best treatment principles for adolescents](#); and
- [A fact sheet for parents](#).

For more information, resources, materials or tips, visit DoseOfRealityFL.com.

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