

Maple Ridge Opioid Overdose Response Task Group

Understanding Youth Drug Use and Overdose



FACT SHEET

Drug-related overdoses and deaths are a serious concern in Maple Ridge. In 2016, there were 27 overdose deaths in the community of Maple Ridge. This was the highest rate per population in the Fraser Health region and one of the highest rates in the province. According to the BC Coroners Service, in BC during 2016, 12 youths aged 10 to 19 died of illicit drug overdoses.

Overdoses are increasingly linked with fentanyl, a synthetic opioid 50 to 100 times more toxic than morphine. As little as a few grains worth is enough to cause overdose or death. There is no way to know if a drug is safe or if it contains a lethal amount of fentanyl or other contaminants. Taking opioids in combination with other drugs or alcohol makes an overdose more likely to occur.

Drugs don't discriminate: anyone can overdose. Stigma is a contributing factor to overdose events and deaths, as people use substances in isolation, and hide their use from those around them. Whether your child experiments with drugs for the first time or uses regularly, serious harm or death is a real possibility. Celebrations and High school graduation are a time when the risk is unusually high.

What can I do?

Know the signs of overdose

- Disorientation, dizziness, trouble with walking or talking
- Sleepiness or cannot be woken
- Slow, shallow breathing or absent breathing
- Unfamiliar "snoring" sound, gurgling or coughing
- Cold or clammy skin, discolouration of lips or nails
- Pupils extremely small

Good Samaritan Act – Can you get into trouble if you call 911?

If you contact emergency medical or law enforcement for assistance when you, or someone else, is experiencing an overdose this law means you will not be charged for possession or charges related to possession.

What to do if you suspect an overdose:

Call 911 Immediately.

Give Breaths

- Make sure there is nothing in their mouth blocking their airway, or stopping them from breathing.
- Give Breaths: Plug the nose, tilt the head back and give one breath every 5 seconds.

Use Naloxone (Narcan) if you have it: a safe medication that can reverse the effects of opioid overdose.

For information regarding Naloxone Kits contact:

Alouette Addictions	604-467-5179	22477 Lougheed Hwy
Maple Ridge Health Unit	604-476-7000	22470 Dewdney Trunk Rd
Rain City Shelter	604-466-8338	22239 Lougheed Hwy



Talk to your children about the risks:

- Educate your child about what to do in an emergency and teach him/her not to be afraid to call for help; let them know they won't get arrested.
- Know what some of the warning signs are if your children are using drugs;
- Know what resources and supports exist in Maple Ridge.

How do I talk to my child about drug use?

Here are some tips for starting and having those conversations:

- Look for opportunities to talk about drug use with your teenager, like when you discuss school events, such as graduation;
- Listen to them and respect their opinion. If they see you as a good listener, they may be more inclined to trust your input. Give them room to participate and ask questions;
- Focus on facts rather than emotions. If your teenager is using drugs, you may feel anger, sadness, fear or confusion. Those are natural reactions. But talking about the issue is more productive than talking about your feelings;
- Avoid blaming, shaming and lecturing;
- Respect their independence. Ask questions; let them tell you what they know. Let them know you are trying to help them make good decisions, sharing information they may not know;
- Be clear about why you are worried. Whatever your teenager may think, communicate that your main concern is for their well-being.

There are protective factors you can foster that can decrease your child's risk of using drugs. These include:

- Providing consistent support, involvement, structure and discipline in your child's life;
- Being responsive and open to communicating and resolving conflict with your child;
- If you are taking prescription opioid medications, alert your children what the medications are for and store them safely away.

Talking points for overdose prevention:

- If you are using drugs, have a buddy you can trust with you who is sober, able to recognize the signs of an overdose, and willing to call for medical help if you need it.
- If using drugs, we strongly advise you not to mix drugs and alcohol. If you do mix drugs and alcohol, use the drugs first before the alcohol.

For Information /Resources:

www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-ps/pubs/adp-apd/talk-aborder/index-eng.php

www.fraserhealth.ca/health-info/mental-health-substance-use/child-and-youth/

towardtheheart.com/

Community Resources available:

Alouette Addictions	604-467-5179	22477 Lougheed Hwy
Astra for Youth	604-836-6580	
Greg Moore Youth Wellness Centre	604-467-6911ext. 1222	11925 Haney Place
Maple Ridge Health Unit	604-476-7000	22470 Dewdney Trunk Rd
Ridge Meadows Hospital	604-463-4111	11666 Laity Street

