

# Life Cut Short for an All-American Kid



Jaydon Rogers

The first words that Ryan Rogers used to describe his son were an “all-American kid.” 22-year-old Jaydon loved his family—especially his siblings and five-year-old nephew. He loved being outside, and enjoyed mountain biking, snowboarding, and most other sports.

Jaydon had a fun-loving spirit and a charismatic smile that could light up any room; he was inspired by helping others and touched the lives of many. However, all of Jaydon’s enthusiasm for life came to a halt on March 14, 2018 when his life was cut short after he unknowingly took a counterfeit pill. “Jaydon fought the fight of his life to stay here,” Jaydon’s dad told us, “but he passed away as a result of fentanyl poisoning.”

If you had to pick the sport that was closest to Jaydon’s heart, it would have been wrestling. Recalling that his son had always been an active kid, Ryan said, “We put him in it at a young age because he came home from school with a flyer. Oh, that was his passion.” Jaydon used that passion to fuel his wrestling dream. In his senior year at Fremont High School, he placed first in the 2014 5A State Wrestling Championship. Remembering that day, Ryan said, “It was a goal he had set for himself from a young age, and I will never forget after he came running up into the stands. The hug he gave me is something I will never forget. It is priceless to me. Just watching your kids achieve their goals is pretty special.”

Jaydon attended college at Western Wyoming Community College on a wrestling scholarship and was a Junior College All-American wrestler there. After returning home, he worked as an assistant coach at his old high school, along with several other jobs. When Jaydon did not show up to work one Monday, his father found him unresponsive and called 9-1-1. Emergency responders rushed Jaydon to the hospital, but he never fully regained consciousness. Jaydon remained on life support for a short time because of his choice to be an organ donor.

When fentanyl did not show up on the hospital’s drug screen, the doctors wanted to blame natural causes, but Jaydon’s mom, Misti, protested. “There was no way it

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## 49 States Have a Deadly Fentanyl Problem

### What is in these fake pills?

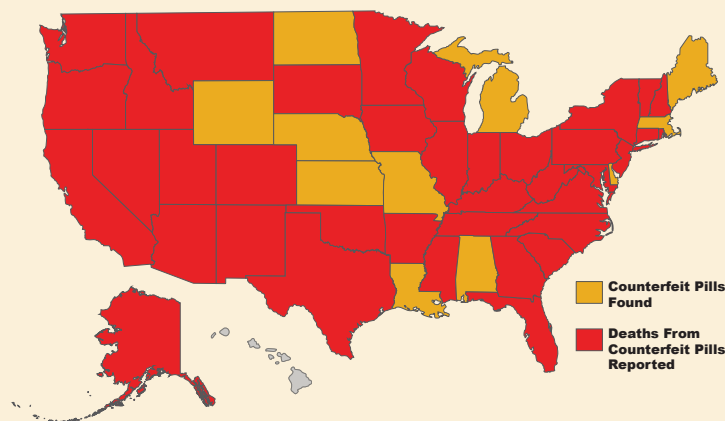
Pills that look like prescription painkillers, anti-anxiety meds, and even aspirin have all been found. They contain deadly doses of fentanyl or related analogues sourced from illegal labs overseas.

### Where do they come from?

Mexican cartels and rogue Chinese manufacturers make finished pills which are then smuggled and mailed into the U.S. Illicit Chinese chemical companies also mail raw fentanyl and pill presses to ambitious U.S. drug dealers who then use them to make counterfeit prescription medication.

### When did the epidemic start?

Cartels and dealers first mixed fentanyl into heroin in the 1990s, but the first reports of fake prescription medications made with fentanyl came in 2014.



**As of January 2020, counterfeit fentanyl pills have been found in 49 states with confirmed deaths in 38. “49 States and Counting,” the most recent update, is available at <http://safedr.org/49states>**

was just out of the blue or anything,” said Ryan. “We didn’t buy that for a sec.” Toxicology reports eventually confirmed the family’s suspicion that Jaydon did not die from natural causes. Sheriffs were able to use information on Jaydon’s phone to bring charges against the men responsible for selling him that deadly pill.

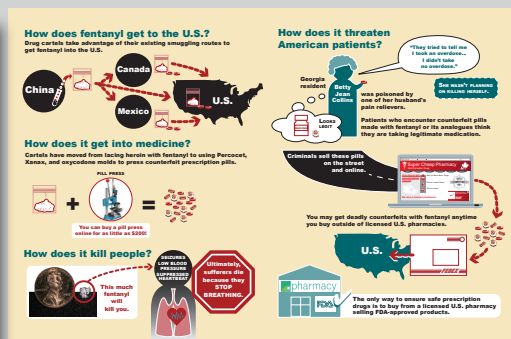
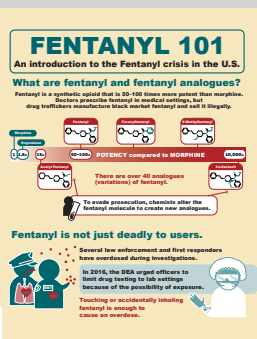
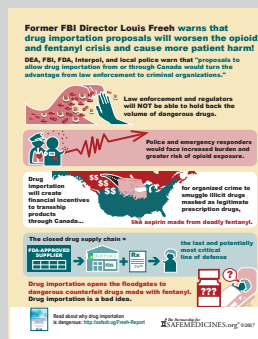
Jaydon’s family has been left with a hole that can never be filled. “Well, it changes everything,” said Ryan. “Everybody is missing him. I don’t know how to put it other than to just say everything is not the same, and it will never be the same without him.”

Ryan said losing their son has opened his family’s eyes about how broad the threat of fentanyl really is. “I never would have thought that this would happen to him or us. This wasn’t normal for him. This was not something

he did on a regular basis. With this, one time is all that it takes,” he said. Misti, agrees. “I know too well that so many of these crimes are thought of as victimless, I guess because they themselves made a choice in it as well. I think it’s very important to know that Jaydon did not have a history of drug use or abuse.”

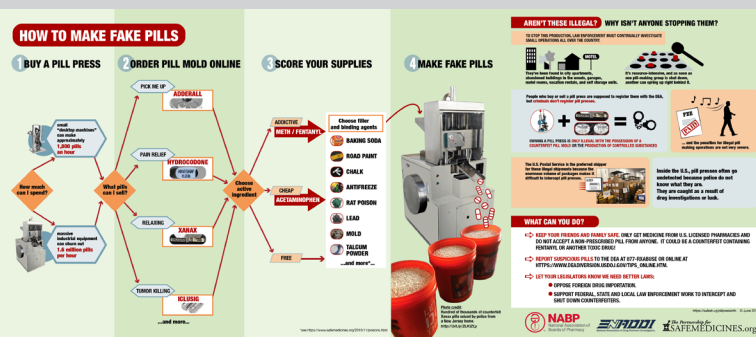
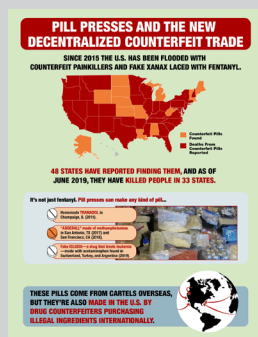
Jaydon was not the first person in Utah to have been killed by these deadly fake pills. Although the three individuals whose actions put that pill into his hand have been held responsible, there have been other fentanyl pill rings found in the state, including in Cottonwood and South Jordan. More information about incidences of counterfeit medicine in Utah can be found here: <https://safedr.org/Utah>.

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