

**THE  
FACTS.  
YOUR  
FUTURE.**

# **INSTRUCTOR GUIDE**

**Lesson 3:  
Healthy  
Relationships  
and Building  
Community**

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**TheFactsYourFuture.org**





# 3.1 OVERVIEW

## Before You Begin

This guide is intended for use when administering *The Facts. Your Future. Substance Abuse Curriculum* in a classroom setting. This curriculum is designed to comply with and meet the Florida Substance Use and Abuse Standards (HE.912.SUA). The target audience is youth in grades 9-12.

Prior to administering this lesson, it is recommended that instructors have reviewed the following:

- *The Facts. Your Future. Drug Facts for Instructors*
  - Fentanyl
  - Alcohol
  - Marijuana
  - Vaping
  - Prescription Drugs
- *The Facts. Your Future. Substance Abuse Curriculum - Lesson 1: Defining Choices Instructor Guide*
- *The Facts. Your Future. Substance Abuse Curriculum - Lesson 2: Building Coping Skills Instructor Guide*
- *The Facts. Your Future. Substance Abuse Curriculum - Lesson 3: Healthy Relationships and Building Community Instructor Guide*

It is also recommended that instructors have information available for organizations that provide drug use and abuse counseling and treatment services to teens in need. Information is located in *The Facts. Your Future. Drug Facts for Instructors* and at [TheFactsYourFuture.org](https://TheFactsYourFuture.org).





## Notes

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Below is a list of equipment and materials suggested to facilitate *The Facts. Your Future*. Lesson 3: Healthy Relationships and Building Community:

- Computer (optional)
- Whiteboard or blackboard
- Screen large enough for multiple participants to view the resources
- Participant copies of Lesson 3 activities and worksheets

For each lesson, a sample script is provided for the instructor along with a list of recommended resources.

## Overview

Lesson 3 focuses on the most important aspect of building resilience in youth: healthy relationships and community. In this lesson, participants will begin to think about the concept of a trust network, like a parent, or those who can be counted on to make them feel safe, heard, and respected. Participants will explore what it means to advocate for themselves and for a friend who may need additional support. Finally, they will be asked to consider their personal message which will keep them connected to their underlying **why** when choosing to refuse opioids and other substances.

## Learning Objectives

By the end of Lesson 3, participants will be able to:

1. Define a trusted adult and identify three (3) adults they trust in their life.
2. Clearly state their personal message.
3. Understand what it means to advocate for themselves and ask for help.
4. Know when and how to advocate for a friend.

## Standards

Lesson 3 addresses the following Substance Use and Abuse Florida Health Education Standards:

- HE.912.SUA.5

## Timing

Lesson 3 is 30 minutes long. This curriculum is designed with built-in flexibility allowing instructors the ability to adapt the material to the time frame they have in which to deliver the content. Recommendations are provided for guidance about how to implement each section.

## What's Included

Included in Lesson 3 are the following instructional and supplemental materials:

- **Instructor Guide** – This guide includes recommendations for implementation, examples for learning objectives, video links, and sample worksheets and activities included in Lesson 3.
- **Participant Worksheets** – Lesson 3 includes several participant engagement activities and worksheets. These resources can be downloaded and printed for distribution at: [TheFactsYourFuture.org/curriculum](https://TheFactsYourFuture.org/curriculum)

## Key Terms

- **Advocate** – To speak up for yourself, your beliefs, or on behalf of a friend. It also means asking for help when it's needed.
- **Personal Message** – A statement that sums up what matters most to you and why, specifically when refusing opioids or other substances.
- **Trust Network** – A list of adults, like parents, teachers, or coaches that you trust and can go to when you need help.
- **Your Why** – Knowing what matters to you and why.


## Notes



# 3.2 TRUST NETWORK

## Overview

In this section, participants will define what a trusted adult is and identify adults, like parents, in their life who can help them in challenging or unsafe situations.


 **KEY TAKEAWAY:** Identifying trusted adults in your life helps you know who you can go to for help.

 **TIME:** 3 minutes

 **RESOURCES NEEDED:**

- Instructor Script

## INSTRUCTOR SCRIPT

 We mentioned the power of relationships in Lesson 2 and how they can help you build resilience and bounce back from difficult situations. Relationships with your parents and caregivers are especially important. Think of an adult in your life who always makes you feel safe. They really listen to you, offer advice when you ask for it, and let you know your thoughts and ideas are heard and respected. For many of you, your parents, guardian, or caregiver immediately come to mind. For some of you, this may not be the case, but there is another adult in your life who fills a similar role.



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At the end of this Instructor Guide, there are recommended trusted resources for both instructors and participants to reference. Also, there are Drug Fact Sheets for both instructors and participants with this information. To access these fact sheets, scan the QR code on page 3.



Identifying who the trusted adults (e.g., parents, etc.) are in your life *now* helps you know who to go to when you need help, for yourself or someone else. Whenever possible, a parent(s), guardian, or caregiver is a good place to start.

Notice, however, this isn't just one parent. You're going to identify more than one adult because every situation is different, and some adults may be better equipped to handle certain situations than others. Some may be available at different times or only located in specific places. Here are some examples:

- Your mom may be the person you go to when you're feeling sad.
- Your dad may be the person you go to when you need solid advice.
- Your aunt may be the person you can always run a hypothetical question by to get more information, day or night.
- Your mentor may be the person who will listen to you talk for hours and only offer advice when you clearly ask for it.
- Your school's guidance counselor may be the person you reach out to when you're concerned about a friend.
- Your coach may be the person you turn to when you're having trouble deciding what the best next step is.

These people become part of your larger trust network. To illustrate what a trust network is, let's talk through the question: Who do you trust?

### Activity: Who Do You Trust?

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- **Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to help participants identify trusted adults in their life who will ultimately be part of their trust network.
- **Method:** Instructor-led discussion and participant reflection
- **Instructions:** Instructor follows the discussion prompts below.

## Instructor Discussion Prompts



Now let's talk through a few factors that may help you identify the adults that you trust, including a parent, guardian, or caregiver, in your life. Let's consider the location of the adult, topics you may want or need to talk about, and their availability.

Here are some questions to consider:

- **Location:** Do you have an adult that you trust at home or in your family (e.g., parent, caregiver, older sibling, etc.)? School? Work? In a club? On a team? In a religious or faith-based organization?
- **Topics:** Is there a parent and/or trusted adults you would go to for advice? Information about difficult subjects, such as your mental health or substance use? Encouragement?
- **Availability:** Can you get help in the middle of a weekday? After school? In an emergency?

**Instructor Note:** Remind participants to keep these adults in mind because they will write them down later in this lesson.



In addition to parents, guardians, and caregivers, there are also resources such as drug use hotlines, non-profit organizations, and mental health and well-being services. Trained experts are available to provide help in key areas such as substance abuse disorders and treatment options, crisis counseling, mental health support, and more.

At the end of this lesson, you will write down three adults in your life and be provided with a few resources available to you when you need help.

Building your network is an important step in advocating for yourself. Now that you have this network of adults and resources in mind, let's think about how and when you should ask for help.

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**38% of disciplinary actions in Florida schools involve drugs and illicit substances.**

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**Parents and trusted resources make up a youth's trust network.**




# 3.3 ADVOCATING FOR YOU

## Overview

This section emphasizes the importance of participants advocating for themselves, what it means, and examples of *how* to advocate for themselves. Participants will develop a personal message that can be their go-to response when faced with a challenging situation like refusing opioids or other substances.

-  **KEY TAKEAWAY:** How, when, and who to ask (and keep asking) to get help.
-  **TIME:** 10 minutes
-  **RESOURCES NEEDED:**
  - Instructor Script
  - Activity: My Personal Message Worksheet

## INSTRUCTOR SCRIPT

-  Advocating for YOU, or self-advocacy, means speaking up for yourself, your beliefs, and asking for help when you need it. Self-advocacy takes everything we've been talking about and applying it.



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It only takes two salt-sized grains of fentanyl to kill someone.



- It means knowing what stresses you out and how you typically respond.
- It means thinking through healthy coping strategies to help you deal with challenging situations.
- It means knowing what's important to you in order to establish personal boundaries.
- It means forming your trust network with adults and resources that can help you.
- It means knowing **your why**.

Knowing what matters to you and why can help you advocate for yourself in situations that may have been intimidating in the past.

Here are a few scenarios that demonstrate how your why can help you advocate for yourself:

**Instructor Note:** You may choose to read some or all of these. The idea is to move participants *from* what they've learned in each lesson *toward* personal application.

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Reflection: How does knowing what is important to you and why impact your daily decisions about using or not using opioids and other substances?

## Scenario 1



You have routinely gone out with friends after practice but have started to notice that you're sluggish the next day and have trouble focusing in class and on tests. You decide that you will no longer go out after practice so that you can get 8 hours of sleep each night.

**Decision:** You decline invitations to go out at night after practice.

**Your Why:** Your classes and your entire day are much easier when you get 8 hours of sleep each night.

It's easy for you to stick to this boundary around your time by saying no to this type of invitation because you know it's not worth it to wake up late and struggle through the next day.

## Scenario 2



You have a tendency to react to test-related stress by avoiding it at all costs, but that has led to two failed tests. You decide to study with a friend prior to the next test to try and bring up your grade.

**Decision:** You ask a friend for help studying.

**Your Why:** You want to handle academic stress in a healthy way and ultimately do better on tests.

Knowing your tendency to avoid studying for tests helps you identify the healthy coping skill of asking a friend for help.

## Scenario 3



You have a relative who struggles with addiction, and you've seen the toll it takes on everyone in the family. You just don't want to take the chance that you may struggle as well. So you have a hard rule that you always say no to drinking with friends and ensure you are not in situations where drinking will be present.

**Decision:** You do not drink and avoid situations where alcohol will be present.

**Your Why:** You have a relative who struggles with addiction and don't want to take a chance that you could too.

These are clear examples of how knowing your WHY directly influences the decisions you make. Knowing why something is important to you makes it less likely you'll cross your own boundaries or forget about them altogether. It may not always be easy to advocate for yourself in a situation where it seems like you're doing things differently than your friends. However, knowing your why helps you feel confident in making choices that fit your goals, values, and beliefs. It helps you know what you're saying yes to.

**Fentanyl slows the respiratory system, causing apnea and other breathing problems while sleeping. It may also cause hypoxia, where not enough oxygen reaches the brain.**

## Notes

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## Scenario 4:

- Your guardian had a major car accident leaving them in severe pain. To manage the pain, they used prescribed opioids. However, now that they have recovered, they are dependent on these opioids. Later, you learn you will need surgery due to a sports injury. Following the surgery, you are in severe pain and your doctor immediately prescribes opioids. You are hesitant to use them to manage the pain because of what your guardian is going through. You talk with your doctor about your concerns and decide together to use other pain management methods before trying opioids to manage the pain.

**Decision:** You ask your doctor to help you with an alternative pain management strategy rather than starting with opioids.

**Your Why:** Your guardian used opioids as their primary pain management strategy and is now dependent on them.

Once you know your why, it's important to write it down and practice saying it to another person, just like you did when practicing refusal skills. In fact, your why can be a refusal skill for certain situations like refusing to use opioids and other drugs.

All of this combined can lead you to clearly and quickly summing up what matters most to you and why. This becomes your **personal message**.

Developing a personal message takes time and practice. So, let's try an activity that may help you start.

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## Activity: My Personal Message Worksheet

- **Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to help participants think about their why and how it applies to refusing opioids and other drugs and other risky behaviors.
- **Method:** Worksheet
- **Instructions:** Participants follow instructions on the worksheet.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## MY PERSONAL MESSAGE

Thinking about what you will say or do in a situation before it happens can help give you the confidence you need to stay focused on your goals and refuse anything that would interfere with them, such as using opioids or other drugs. Think back to the My Brand Story & Vision worksheet from Lesson 2 where you wrote down some of your hopes and goals for the future. These things help define your **why**. With these as a guide, use the space below to write your own personal message that clearly states your why.

### Define Your Why.

Take a moment to think about the words, notes, and pictures you put on the My Brand Story & Vision worksheet. How does using opioids and other drugs interfere with your hopes and goals? Write down words or phrases that come to mind in the space below. Then, using your notes, write down a statement that completes the following statement: *I choose to avoid risky behaviors such as using opioids and other substances because...* Write your statement in the space below.

#### My Why

Words or phrases:

- lose control
- makes me less focused
- harms body

I choose to avoid risky behaviors like using opioids and other substances because they could harm my body and make me less focused on my goal of getting a summer internship.

### Make the Message.

Now think about the result of your **My Response Tendency** self-assessment. Thinking about how you tend to respond to stress, write a message (or plan) for how you would stick to your goals and get out of a negative situation (whether it be using opioids or other drugs, a mental health challenge, a relationship issue, etc.) in a healthy way. You may respond to the situation with defiance, humor, facts, advocacy, or with the help of others. Lean into your tendency and use your why to write a personal message to respond to a harmful situation you might face. Think of some of the refusal techniques explored in Lesson 2 to get you started.

#### My Personal Message

To help stay focused on my goal to get a summer internship, I plan to surround myself with friends who have similar goals so we can keep each other on track.

## Notes



Now that you've created your personal message, you can refer to it anytime you need help remembering your why. Also, this can help with another part of advocating for yourself, which is knowing when to ask for help.

Asking for help can be intimidating and it may bring up fears that you're not strong enough to handle things on your own or that you'll get in trouble. You may even think you'll get in trouble. But your parent(s), guardian, caregiver, and adults in your life want you to feel supported. They want to help you through hard times, not struggle on your own. Asking for help shows you understand when a problem is too much to be solved alone, and this is a huge sign of strength.

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**Reflection: Ask students to reflect on what information might be helpful to them when considering whether to use or not use opioids or other drugs or when advocating for themselves for others.**

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**Overdoses kill more U.S. citizens than breast cancer, guns, and car crashes combined.**



And, there are different ways you can ask for help.

### **Ask for More Information**

For example, advocating for yourself can be as simple as asking for more information about a topic, like:

- What really happens to your body when you vape?
- Does the school have any groups or support for people who have experienced bullying?
- Can I get addicted to pain pills after taking them for wisdom tooth surgery?

As we discussed in Lesson 1, asking for more information - knowing the facts - can help you make informed choices that will allow you to meet your future goals.

### **Be Open**

Advocating for yourself and your needs can also mean being open about what you're experiencing, even when it's hard. This could look like telling an adult (e.g. parent, teacher, coach, etc.):

- I'm not feeling like myself lately. I think I want to talk to someone about my mental health.
- Lots of people in my grade are vaping. I know it's bad for you, but I'm tempted to try it.
- I'm feeling overwhelmed juggling school, a part-time job, and my responsibilities at home. I'm getting headaches and am having trouble sleeping. I just want something that will make me feel better.

Asking for help sooner gives your parent(s), guardian, and caregiver the opportunity to determine the resources, services, or extra support you need before the situation becomes worse or you turn to unhealthy coping strategies. And if asking for help doesn't work the first time, keep asking until you get the help you need.

# 3.4 ADVOCATING FOR A FRIEND

## Overview

In addition to advocating for themselves, it's important for participants to understand their unique position in recognizing when a friend or family member may need help. This section discusses approaches and strategies for advocating for a friend and culminates in them developing an action plan for advocating for themselves and others.



**KEY TAKEAWAY:** You're in a unique position to notice when a friend needs help and to be an advocate for them.



**TIME:** 7 minutes



### RESOURCES NEEDED:

- Instructor Script
- Activity: Advocacy Action Plan Worksheet

## INSTRUCTOR SCRIPT



Some of you may have a friend who is struggling. Maybe they are struggling with feeling overwhelmed by everyday stressors or with defining decisions such as whether to try opioids or other drugs. You may notice a friend has a problem with drug abuse, and you recognize they need help. They may need you to advocate for them in some way.



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**Abuse of prescription  
drugs can cause:  
sedation, heart attack,  
memory loss, cognitive  
damage, suicidal  
thoughts, seizures,  
tremors, or death.**



When someone is really struggling, whether with excessive stress, mental health challenges, or drug addiction, it can feel impossible for them to get help for themselves. They may not even realize how bad things have gotten. Friends are in a great position to notice changes in someone's mood or behavior and be an advocate to get them the help they need.

#### **Do Some Homework**

If you think a friend is struggling with drug abuse, take some time to do your homework. This goes back to knowing the facts. All this means is taking a few minutes to learn about the effects of opioids and other drugs.

Doing your homework can also mean taking a few minutes ahead of time to think through, and even write out, what you're going to say.

#### **Start the Conversation**

Having conversations like this can be hard, but here are some examples of ways you can get the conversation started to help advocate for a friend:





- **Talk to them about your concerns.** Using “I” statements and open-ended questions lets them know what you’ve observed and what has caused you to feel concerned.
  - I noticed you haven’t wanted to get together lately. So, I’m checking to see how you’re doing.
  - Last night your words sounded slurred, and I saw an empty beer can in your bag. I’m worried that you’ve been drinking, and I want you to know I’m here for you.
- **Bring in a parent or guardian.** It may feel uncomfortable or like you’re telling on them if you talk to an adult, but nothing is more important than your friend’s health, safety, and well-being.
  - I’m concerned about your safety, and I think it’s time to talk to an adult about this to get the best kind of help for you. I know this is scary to think about, so I’ll be there for the conversation if you want. Who do you think would be best to talk to first?
  - Should we talk to your parent or someone else you trust? I know that might seem scary, but I can go with you, if it helps.
- **Let them know what support you can provide.** Giving examples of how you can be there for them can be especially helpful.
  - I’ve had times when it’s been difficult to manage my anxiety too. Would it be helpful to see my list of coping strategies or make a list for you together?

It can be hard to think about when and how to help a friend in need, and you might even feel scared to do it.

Let’s do an activity where you can start to think about how you might be able to advocate for a friend in need.

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High school students who legitimately use prescription opioids are **33% more likely to abuse opioids after high school.**

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For more help with talking to a friend about opioid or drug use, visit: <https://TheFactsYourFuture.org/help-your-friends/>



It's important for teachers to recognize signs that may indicate a problem with opioid or drug use such as:

- Changes in mood such as a lack of interest, increased irritability, or sadness and depression;
- Changes in behavior such as abrupt changes in friends, sleepiness in class, behavior problems, or a sudden drop in academic performance; or
- Changes in appearance such as bloodshot or red eyes, unexplained weight gain or loss, poor hygiene, or unexplained injuries.

## Activity: Advocacy Action Plan Worksheet

- **Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is for participants to apply what they have learned so far about stressors, their response tendency, coping strategies, boundaries, their trust network, their why, and advocacy to developing an action plan that can help guide them when they are faced with a challenging, or unsafe, situation.
- **Method:** Worksheet / Reflection
- **Instructions:** Participants follow instructions on the worksheet.

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YOUR FUTURE.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**ADVOCACY ACTION PLAN**

This activity takes everything you've learned in *The Facts. Your Future*, Lessons 1-3 and asks you to apply it by creating a plan of action for how to advocate for yourself and others when faced with a challenging, or unsafe, situation. Think about a situation that you have faced or might face, where you, a friend, or a family member would need help. Some possible scenarios could include bullying, mental health challenges, opioid or other drug use, or emotional or physical harm.

**My Response Tendency**

*From Lesson 2: Response Tendency Self-Assessment*  
List your response tendency here. Write at least one example of a way you could advocate for yourself or a friend using your response tendency.  
  
ostrich: If my friend plans to go to a party to drink, I can invite them to do something else during that time that I know they enjoy doing more to avoid the party.

**My Trusted Adults**

*From Lesson 3: Trust Network*  
List at least three people (i.e., trusted adults) from your trust network that you would go to for help.  
  
1 My mom  
2 My soccer coach  
3 My older brother

**My Personal Message (My Why)**

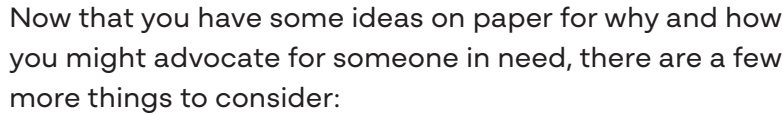
*From Lesson 2: My Brand Story and Vision + Lesson 3: My Personal Message*  
Think about your why and either rewrite your personal message here or try answering this question: Why is it important for me to advocate for myself or someone else?  
  
It's important for me to advocate for myself so that I can be there for the people I love and to keep my job which I like. It's important for me to advocate for my friends because I want them to be ok and be around for a long time.

**MY ADVOCACY ACTION PLAN**

I plan to ask for help for myself or a friend in a situation like I am overwhelmed and thinking about drinking by doing and saying the following (note: this can be a list of steps, who you would go to, something you might say, or a combination):  
  
1. Go to my older brother and ask if we can talk. 2. Let him know what's going on and ask for advice. He usually helps me calm down. 3. Ask him if we can do something fun to take my mind off the situation for a while.

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Connect to Resources →



- Instructor Note:** For more examples of healthy coping strategies, visit: <https://mentalhealthcenterkids.com/blogs/articles/coping-skills-for-teens>

You've been asked to consider many factors about your life – who you trust, your future goals, what matters most to you, and more. For some of you, these were easy tasks. For others, it seemed impossible. Yet all of this helps create your support system, or trust network. This network is vital to help you cope with stress in a positive way, advocate for yourself and others, and ultimately make defining decisions that keep you connected to what matters most to you – your why. This includes the decisions you make about risky behaviors like using opioids or other drugs.

## Notes



# How to Get Help

If you know someone has issues with continued opioid or substance use, seek professional help. A doctor can screen for signs of **drug use** and related health conditions and suggest possible next steps. Other more immediate resources include:

## 988 Florida Lifeline

Call, text, or chat 988 to be connected to trained counselors.

**988LIFELINE.ORG**

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## CORE Network

A long-term substance use disorder recovery program designed to establish a coordinated system of care for those seeking treatment for substance use disorder.

**FLCORENETWORK.COM**

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## iSaveFL

Drug overdose is a nationwide epidemic and an increasing number of Floridians are losing their lives to overdose - you can help save a life with naloxone.

**ISAVEFL.COM**

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## Local Services

If you or someone you know is in need of substance abuse and/or mental health services, our local managing entities can help you locate available programs.

**MYFLFAMILIES.COM/  
SAMH-GET-HELP**

# Addressing Prevention with Youth

## Listen

A young person may come to you for advice, or you may notice concerning changes in behavior. Refrain from judgment. Listen, and try to learn more about what's going on.

## Talk early and often

Regular conversations about the risks of opioids and other substances can help. Have a prevention plan, and address drug use in different ways throughout the year.

## Start with the facts

Discuss the mental and physical health impacts of drugs. Focus on the harm drug use can do to academics and relationships.

## Practice

Consider taking time to role play various scenarios about coping with stress, what to do if a friend offers you opioids or other drugs, or what to do if a friend needs help.

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**The Facts. Your Future.** is a multifaceted initiative led by Florida's First Lady, Casey DeSantis, to heighten youth understanding of the dangerous and life-altering effects of drug use.

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Get more Facts for  
Teens about **Opioids  
and Substance Abuse**

**TheFactsYourFuture.org**

