

Link to new website: songforcharlie.org/

Link to video trailer: youtu.be/0SLuOnDp8tg

Awarded the Silver Honor in the Youth & Family category for the Shorty Impact Awards (shortyawards.com/8th-impact/wondros-submission).

Song For Charlie:

Driving awareness around
mental health and the dangers
of fake pills for Gen Z

Updated 2025-01



The Opportunity

Counterfeit pills are everywhere, and 1 in 4 contain fentanyl. This problem is tragically on the rise throughout the United States; **around 15% of all drug deaths are caused by fake pills, and the number is 2 to 3 times that for youth ages 15–24.** Ed and Mary Ternan founded the organization Song for Charlie (SFC) when their son Charlie passed away at age 22 after taking what he believed to be a Percocet that his friend had purchased on Snapchat. It turned out to be a counterfeit pill containing Fentanyl, and it killed Charlie almost instantly, three weeks before he was set to graduate from college.

Song for Charlie is a national nonprofit dedicated to **raising awareness and educating young people about the dangers of counterfeit pills, and changing the conversation around youth mental health** to ensure that young people have the support they need to avoid turning to unknown pills.

For the past two and a half years, Wondros has worked closely with SFC, serving as ongoing communications partners and handling creative asset production for the organization. Today, we continue to provide support for the organization across social channels, and have recently completed several large-scale initiatives, including the production of **a long-form documentary aimed at parents and teachers**, and the creation of **a new digital portal to house educational assets.**

Our Approach

To grow Song for Charlie's audience, we crafted a social media strategy targeting youth, including content buckets and **a steady cadence of weekly, custom social content** to generate awareness by balancing facts and storytelling.

Data visualizations helped us bring the shocking facts of the fentanyl epidemic to life with bold visuals. To honor the memories of young people lost to fake prescription pills, we created **the Spotlight Series**. Spotlights use photos and testimonials from surviving family members about their children that speak to who they were and the manner of their passing. These videos became so popular that **we produced multiple videos per month, alongside a library of other custom, branded assets spanning video and graphic formats** optimized for multiple social media platforms, including TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.

Because Snapchat is a platform where dealers sell fake prescription pills, we worked in lockstep with them to create content for their [Heads Up Portal](#). We worked directly with TikTok Philanthropy, joining their EOY #GivingSzn campaign for nonprofits, resulting in **a webinar where we trained surviving youth and families how to film and upload their personal testimonials to TikTok**. Additionally, we've produced video interviews with experts, advocates and others to shed light on various aspects of the issue with their powerful personal stories.

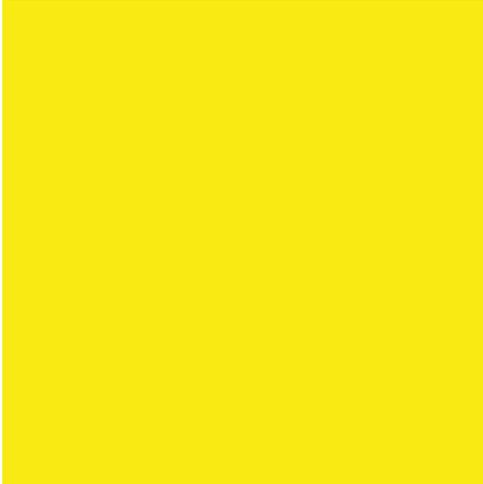
Social Media Assets – Video



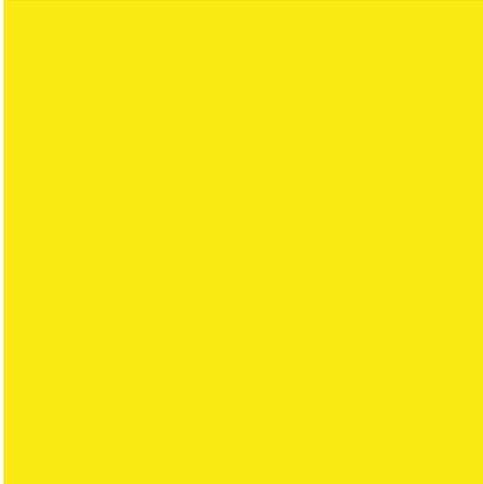
PSA



SPOTLIGHT



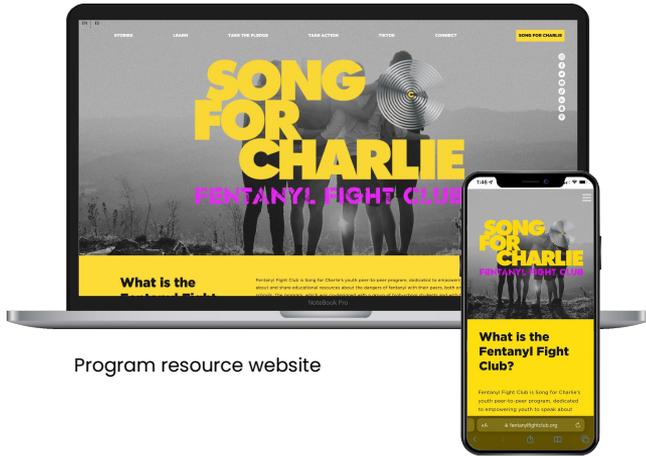
MAP DATA



LINE GRAPH

DATA VISUALIZATION

Fentanyl Fight Club (Peer-To-Peer Program)



Program resource website



A student's self-made video to reach her classmates.



A student's friend has over 30,000 followers so this became an opportunity to share information with a wider peer audience.



Assembling narcan kits



Campus assembly

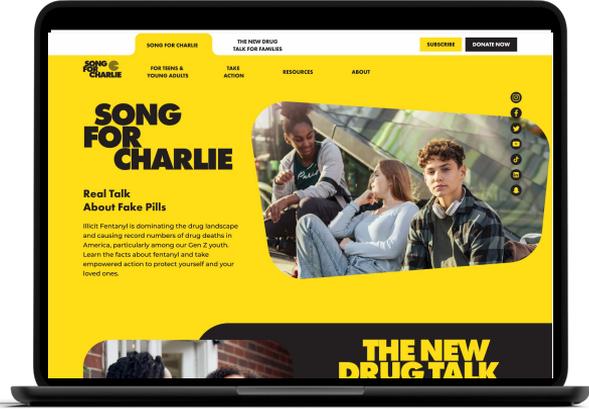
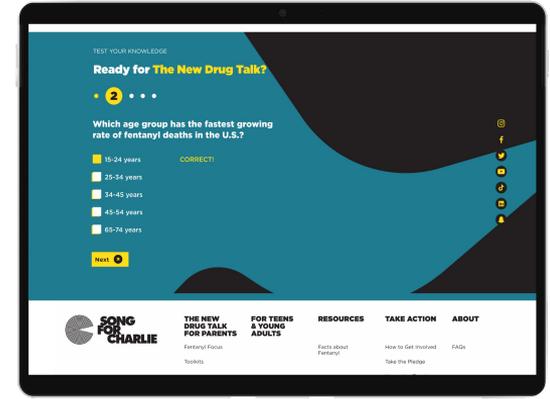
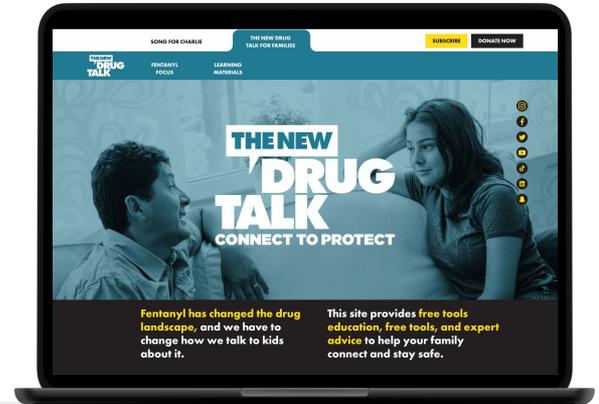


Window cling distributed around LA

The New Drug Talk

This past year, Wondros developed a 30-minute documentary, [The New Drug Talk](#), to support a new SFC initiative in partnership with the California Department of Health Care Services aimed at **providing families, teachers, and students with fentanyl awareness and education resources**. The film features in-depth interviews with individuals affected by and working to address the crisis, from medical professionals to fentanyl overdose survivors. These testimonials are woven together to provide a synoptic view of the crisis, all while **underscoring the importance of addressing mental health problems among the country's youth and centering non-judgmental conversations about substance use**.

On the digital side, Wondros completed a full redesign of the organization's [digital platform](#). Part of this effort was the creation of **a robust content architecture strategy to present complex information around fentanyl resources in an accessible and digestible format** aimed at families and teens. With many existing resources, a key challenge was structuring the information to make it easy to find and understand from a variety of audience perspectives.



Redesigned Song for Charlie web platform

Our Impact

Our work with SFC has yielded a variety of impact metrics. Within our first 6 months of working on SFC's social media, **we were able to generate double, triple, and in some cases quadruple growth in followers across their social platforms.** The campaigns and content we have supported have also gone viral on TikTok, where Song for Charlie has received **over 2.5 million likes.** We are proud to see our messages resonating with young people as well as their teachers and caregivers, and to have built a network of other advocacy groups and organizations with deep experience reaching young people and changing their behavior for the better.

Follower growth rates*
since our work began:

FB 2500%
TW 1500%
IG 156%

Song for Charlie
currently has over
40k followers on
both TikTok
and Snapchat

TikTok averages

50-60,000 organic video views
per month
Facebook and Instagram yield up to
10k video views and
2k engagements
per platform per month.

**data as of 7/31/23*