

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

NEW RELEASE

If They Had Known

Two stories, two deaths...neither should have happened.



"If They Had Known" is a powerful documentary program that delivers candid, clear information about today's teens misusing prescription drugs for recreational purposes AND self-medication, and how it can lead to accidental death.

The film shares the story of Clay Soper's tragic, accidental death. Clay was 19 when he mixed Xanax with alcohol while at a party. The combination caused his heart to stop. Narrated by friends and family, the film is an honest and emotional account of the night Clay died and the lasting impact of his death. Neither Clay or his friends had any idea that mixing prescription drugs with alcohol could kill them or their friend.

Following Clay's story, we expand the conversation to include the heartbreaking story of Drew Pelusi. Drew's life was cut short after he unknowingly purchased counterfeit Xanax online to help manage his anxiety. Drew's story is a warning to teens that using prescription drugs purchased online or off the street can be deadly. It only takes one bad pill to trigger an addiction or take your life.



EDUCATE · ENGAGE · EMPOWER
OUR YOUTH

"If They Had Known" is a program of the Clay Soper Memorial Fund. Our mission is to educate, engage and empower today's teens with life-saving information about the risks of misusing and abusing prescription drugs and to help motivate cultural change among young people.

The Clay Soper Memorial Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE OVERVIEW

To download promotional materials please visit: www.claysopermemorialfund.org/access-toolkit

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DOWNLOADABLE PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

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- ▶ High School Email Blast Copy for Parents & Guardians
- ▶ 8.5" x 14" Posters
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BACKGROUND & SUPPORT US

- ▶ Why We Made This Film
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Applying the Documentary Program : EDUCATORS | COMMUNITY LEADERS | INDIVIDUALS

EDUCATORS

Your license agreement allows for unlimited viewings at your school. We recommend the documentary program "If They Had Known" for academic and extracurricular groups. Here are different ways to reach students, faculty, and parents:

- ❖ Health Education Class lesson or unit
- ❖ Required viewing for sports teams and extracurricular groups
- ❖ Required pre-prom viewing
- ❖ Required viewing during Drug and Alcohol Awareness Week
- ❖ Educational viewing for parents at PTA meetings
- ❖ Programming for first-year high school and college orientation
- ❖ Training programming for administrators, teachers, and coaches
- ❖ A resource tool for school and social counselors

COMMUNITY LEADERS

Community coalitions nationwide are taking the lead in teen substance abuse prevention by bringing educational programs like "If They Had Known" to their towns. Reach out to these community members and ask them to bring "If They Had Known" to your town:

- ❖ Youth leadership groups and organizations
- ❖ Mental health, wellness, and rehabilitation facilities
- ❖ Local community action and community service groups
- ❖ Local Rotary organizations
- ❖ Government officials
- ❖ Community service-oriented businesses and corporations

INDIVIDUAL RENTAL

Let parents and families know **"If They Had Known"** is available (without the toolkit) for individual rental on



Google Play

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Documentary Pre-Viewing Suggestions

- 1) The documentary program should be seen and reviewed by all facilitators and teachers prior to showing the film to student audiences so they are not processing their own reactions while trying to lead a discussion following the film.
- 2) Make sure the room is as dark as possible for optimal viewing and have handouts ready for post viewing discussion.
- 3) It is important to acknowledge that the film is an honest and emotional account of two real events. It is a valuable viewing experience, especially for young people who may find that it reflects some of their own decisions and experiences.

Clay's story is an honest and emotional account of his tragic, accidental death at 19 from mixing prescription drugs with alcohol. It is told by Clay's friends and peers, not actors and the takeaway is genuine and impactful. Clay's story directly addresses the risks surrounding mixing prescription drugs with alcohol.

Drew's story serves as an opportunity to connect with teens who may be struggling with anxiety, stress, and depression. It addresses the temptation to purchase prescription drugs online or off the street as a way to manage their emotional health. The story highlights the dangers of self-medicating with these drugs, emphasizing that it only takes one bad pill to trigger an addiction or even take a life.

- 4) Let your audience know there will be an opportunity for discussion and questions following the film.
- 5) It's very important to give the audience time to process what they've just seen. Play the film to the end credits (wait to see the **www.claysopermemorialfund.org** banner) this will allow everyone some time to reflect and process the information.

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Topics to Help Introduce the Film

- ❖ Today we are watching the documentary “If They Had Known” because we want to bring an awareness and spark a discussion about the deadly risks of misusing prescription drugs.
- ❖ I want to prepare you, for the film can be difficult to watch and may trigger strong emotions. Following the film, we will have an opportunity for discussion and questions.
- ❖ What you are about to see is an honest and emotional account of two real events that resulted in the accidental deaths of two young men.
- ❖ “If They Had Known” begins with the story of Clay Soper’s tragic death, told by his friends who were with him the night he died. Clay did not struggle with addiction, nor did he have a substance abuse issue. He and his friends made a bad decision while at a casual party to mix Xanax with alcohol. They had NO idea this could be a toxic mix. What Clay and his friends “didn’t know” - cost Clay his life.
- ❖ Following Clay’s story, you will learn about Drew Pelusi and how his decision to purchase prescription drugs online to help manage his anxiety triggered an addiction which ultimately cost him his life.
- ❖ Two stories, two deaths ... neither should have happened.

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EDUCATOR : Post Viewing Question Set

Clay's Story:

- ❖ What is your initial reaction to "If They Had Known?"
 - ❖ Before seeing this film were you aware of the dangers of mixing prescription drugs with alcohol?
 - ❖ Do you have friends with prescription medication for anxiety, depression, or ADHD? Have you ever known anyone to share their prescription medication?
 - ❖ Now that "you know" and you've seen what happened to Clay – how can you start a discussion with friends to help spread the word about the risks of mixing prescription drugs with alcohol?
 - ❖ Now that you have seen the film do you think this could happen to you or someone you know?
 - ❖ Would you call for help if you were someplace where people were drinking and taking prescription pills or other drugs, and you were worried about a friend or peer?
 - ❖ What do you think the consequences would be if you did call for help? What if you didn't?
 - ❖ What is our community/campus policy regarding the "Good Samaritan Law" or Medical Amnesty Law?
-

Drew's Story:

- ❖ Are you or do you know anyone, who is self-medicating their emotional health with unprescribed prescription drugs purchased online or off the street?
- ❖ Did you know that the death rate from fentanyl laced pills is the fastest growing among teens?
- ❖ Did you know that in some cases, it only takes one pill to trigger an addiction or take your life?

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COMMUNITY LEADERS : Post Viewing Question Set

- ❖ What is your initial reaction to “If They Had Known?”
- ❖ Before seeing this film were you aware of the dangers of mixing prescription drugs with alcohol?
- ❖ What are your thoughts about how the experience of Clay and his friends are playing out in our community?
- ❖ If your child takes prescribed medications for anxiety, depression, or ADHD, was there a conversation with their doctor about the risks of mixing the prescription with alcohol?
- ❖ Before seeing this film were you aware that teens are turning to the internet and the street to purchase illicit prescription drugs to help manage their emotional health including (anxiety, stress and depression)?
- ❖ What are some of the ways parents and members of the community can support young people in their decisions around prescription drugs and alcohol?
- ❖ How can we help as community members to prevent a tragedy like Clay and Drew’s from happening in our town? (i.e. dispose of your prescription medications properly. The DEA has a National Prescription Drug Take Back Days. Visit dea.gov to fill out the form where you can enter your zip code, country, city and state to find collection sites near you), etc.
- ❖ Does anyone else have ideas of how we can as a community keep our teens safe from prescription drug misuse and abuse?
- ❖ What is our community policy regarding the “Good Samaritan Law” or Medical Amnesty Law? How can we make our kids feel safe about seeking help if needed?

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Post Viewing Closing Comments & Key Message Handout

Knowing these
5 Things could
help save your
life or the life
of your friend:

- 1 Mixing prescription drugs with alcohol can be toxic**
Prescription drugs are not for partying.
Xanax mixed with alcohol killed Clay - it could kill you, too.
- 2 Accidents can happen to anyone - you or your friend could die**
Whether it's your first time, or you've done it before ... misusing prescription drugs for ANY reason can lead to death. You don't know how your body will react.
- 3 Don't hesitate to get help. Every minute counts**
If you think someone is in trouble, call 911 immediately. Don't worry about getting in trouble, don't EVER leave someone alone, and don't assume it's "ok" to let them sleep it off. You could be saving a life.
- 4 Self-medicating your anxiety, stress or depression with unprescribed prescription drugs is a risk not worth taking**
It only takes one bad pill to trigger an addiction or take your life.
- 5 Purchasing prescription drugs online or off the street is extremely dangerous**
Fake pills purchased online or off the street many look like the real thing, but they can be deadly. Fentanyl laced prescriptions are nearly impossible to detect - until it's too late. Don't take that risk.

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Downloadable Promotional Materials

To download the toolkit promotional materials please click on links below or, visit <https://www.claysopermemorialfund.org/access-toolkit>



Local Press Release

Just update the highlighted areas and submit the press release to local media outlets
Format: Word Doc

High School Email Blast Copy for Parents & Guardians

Format: Word Doc



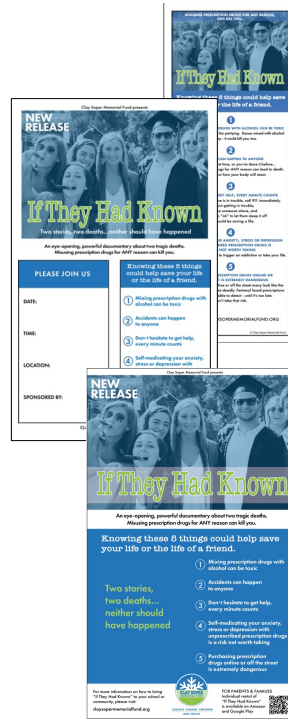
Banner Graphic

Size: 820 x 312px
Format: jpg



Logo Artwork

Format: jpg



Key Message Audience Handout

Key Message: Knowing These 5 Things Could Save Your Life or the Life of a Friend
Format: PDF, 2-up on 8.5"x11"

8.5"x14" Pre-Event Promotional Poster

Add the date, time, location and if you have a sponsor hosting the documentary program
Format: PDF

8.5"x14" Key Message Poster

Knowing These 5 Things Could Save Your Life or the Life of a Friend
Format: PDF

BACKGROUND

Why We Made This Film — Clay's Story

Clay's Story

- Age: 19
No history of substance abuse or addiction
- Rising Sophomore:
University of Denver
- Home for summer break
- Went to a casual party where he and his friends mixed Xanax with alcohol
- They had NO idea that mixing prescription drugs with alcohol could kill them or their friend.
- Clay died that night.



Clayton Soper
1995 - 2015

In the early morning hours of July 18th, 2015 Clay Soper died tragically from the combination of prescription drugs mixed with alcohol. Just shy of his 20th birthday, Clay was a thriving college student home for the summer. That night, he and his friends were doing what many students do in today's party culture. They had no idea that combining prescription drugs with alcohol could kill them or their friend.

Days after Clay's death, a group of his friends came together to provide support for one another. As they struggled to understand how this tragedy could have happened to their friend, the phrase "he didn't know ... we didn't know" was repeated over and over. Clay's tragic death motivated his peers to tell his story in a way that was different from other health related films. "If They Had Known" is an honest and emotional account of what happened that night spoken by the people who were with him. Clay's friends wanted his death to have a purpose — they wanted his death to have an impact on other teens who also may be unaware of the potentially fatal risks of mixing prescription drugs with alcohol.

Nationwide partying with prescription drugs is trending in high schools and on college campuses. Prescription pill recreational misuse and teen deaths are also rising. With the documentary program, "If They Had Known" we hope to help others avoid such a tragic accident. Our mission is to educate, engage and empower today's youth with life-saving information about the risks of misusing and abusing prescription drugs and to help motivate cultural change among young people.

Why We Made This Film — Drew's story and today's fentanyl crisis

Drew's Story

- Age: 23
No history of substance abuse or addiction
- Graduate Student:
Boston University
Computer Science
- Had some anxiety
issues which seemed
to worsen
- Purchased Xanax
online to self-medicate
his anxiety
- That single purchase
triggered an addiction
- Drew died 8 months later



Andrew Pelusi
1998 - 2021

What about all the kids who might be tempted to turn to unprescribed prescription drugs to help manage their anxiety, stress or depression?

The issue of fentanyl-laced street drugs is out of control and is the #1 killer of individuals ages 18-45. For Drew, one bad pill triggered an addiction that ended with his death. Drew was a 23-year-old college graduate student who attempted to manage his anxiety with Xanax purchased online but, the Xanax he purchased was laced with fentanyl. Thanks to emergency help, he survived. However, that one bad pill triggered an addiction which ended with his death eight months later.

With one in five high school seniors reporting misusing prescription drugs and fentanyl-related deaths on the rise, now is the time to start a discussion about the dangers of playing with pills.

By including Drew's story, we hope to reach another subset of teens who might be tempted to purchase illicit prescription drugs to manage their emotional health without knowing the risks they are taking. Drew's story along with the social media campaign "**Don't Play With Pills**" aims to reduce teen misuse or prescription drugs and prevent further tragic deaths by raising awareness and addressing this issue head-on. Engaging in this crucial discussion can help prevent further harm and motivate cultural change among young people

SUPPORT US

We Want To Hear From You!

Genny Soper

Please contact Genny directly if you have feedback. Your feedback helps the Clay Soper Memorial Fund improve our programs and helps us build awareness for our life-saving documentary program, "If They Had Known."

Genny Soper (Clay's Mom)
Executive Director
claysopermemorialfund@gmail.com



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Dar Heikkinen

Contact Dar directly if you have any questions about licensing the documentary or, if you have photos or testimonials that will help build awareness and promote "If They Had Known."

Dar Heikkinen
Associate Director
iftheyhadknown@gmail.com

Please let us know if you receive any local media coverage for hosting the documentary program, "If They Had Known."

Follow the Clay Soper Memorial Fund @claysopermemorialfund and share your photos and comments about "If They Had Known" on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Use the contact form on our website to sign-up for our newsletter claysopermemorialfund.org

Let parents and families know
"If They Had Known"
is available (without the toolkit)
for individual rental on
Amazon & GooglePlay