

White House launches anti-opioid ad campaign aimed at youth

June 7 2018, by Ken Thomas

The White House launched a series of new advertisements Thursday aimed at warning young people about the dangers of opioids, taking another step in the effort to turn the tide against the deadly epidemic.

The White House said its first public service campaign would include several partners, including the Ad Council and the Truth Initiative, surrounding four new ads featuring the true stories of [young people](#) who have battled addiction.

The ads will air across digital and [social media platforms](#) and on television, showing real life examples—in startling, graphic terms—of how young people furthered their addictions, including by causing a car crash and self-inflicting a broken arm to gain access to painkillers.

Officials said they expect the donated ad time to be worth at least \$30 million.

"Our goal is to show young Americans the dangers of misusing opioids and how quickly one can become addicted to opioids—as short as five days—also the extreme lengths to which one can go to feed this addiction," said White House counselor Kellyanne Conway.

President Donald Trump declared the opioid crisis a [public health emergency](#) last October and the federal government is expected to spend a record \$4.6 billion this year to fight the opioid crisis.

Drug overdose deaths involving opioids rose to about 46,000 for the 12-month period that ended in October 2017, up about 15 percent from October 2016, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Since his 2016 campaign, Trump has sought to raise more awareness about the dangers of opioids, which include a range of painkillers that can be addictive when misused. They include prescription drugs like hydrocodone, oxycodone and codeine, synthetic opioids like fentanyl that can be made illegally, and illegal drugs like heroin.

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