



DO YOUR PART:
PREVENT YOUTH PRESCRIPTION DRUG MISUSE

TOOLKIT FOR PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS & CAREGIVERS

DID YOU KNOW

WARNING SIGNS / RISK FACTORS

TALKING TO YOUR KIDS

WHAT YOU CAN DO / PREVENTION

RESOURCES

DID YOU KNOW?



- Over 2,000 teens begin abusing prescription drugs each day.
- 96% of drug-related suicide attempts involve prescription drugs.
- More than four in ten teens who have misused or abused a prescription drug got it from their parent's medicine cabinet. The majority of teens got prescription drugs from family and friends.
- One-third of teens say they believe "it's okay to use prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them to deal with an injury, illness or physical pain."
- 43% of teens indicate prescription drugs are easier to get than illicit drugs.
- One in five kids who report having misused prescription drugs has done so before the age of 14.
- Teens most commonly abuse pain relievers (i.e. OxyContin® and Vicodin®), stimulants (i.e. Ritalin® and Adderall®), and sedatives and tranquilizers (i.e. Valium® and Xanax®).
- Every twelve minutes in the United States someone dies from a drug overdose.



43%



43% of teens indicate prescription drugs are easier to get than illicit drugs.

DID YOU KNOW

WARNING SIGNS



- Missing medication from family members.
- Changes in appearance and behavior.
- Abrupt mood swings.
- Physical signs - constricted pupils, nausea, flushed skin, flu like symptoms.
- Excessive over-the-counter medicine use.
- Always looking for money.
- Trouble in school.
- Loss of interest in job, family, friends, exercise, hobbies, relationships, etc.
- Missing valuables.
- Unusual objects - straws, foil, burnt spoons, bottle caps.

RISK FACTORS

- Lack of parental supervision.
- Younger age (use commonly begins in teens and early 20s).
- Exposure to peer pressure or a social environment where there is drug use.
- Easy access to prescription drugs.
- Lack of knowledge about prescription drugs.
- Past or present addictions to other substances, including alcohol.



Many teens say their parents are not discussing the dangers of prescription drug abuse with them.

TALKING TO YOUR KIDS



Conversations can be a powerful tool parents can use to connect with and protect kids. When tackling tough topics, especially those about drugs and alcohol, figuring out what to say can be challenging. Here are some conversation starters:

- ▶ **Scenario:** Your child tells you he was offered prescription medicine by a classmate - but said no.
 - ◀ **What to say:** Praise your child for making a good choice and telling you about it. Let him know that he can always blame you to get out of a bad situation. If you're ever offered drugs or someone else's medicine at school, tell that person, "My mother would kill me if I took that and then she wouldn't let me play baseball." You'll want to follow-up with the other parent and/or school.

- ▶ **Scenario:** You find out that kids are selling prescription drugs at your child's school. Your child hasn't mentioned it.
 - ◀ **What to say:** I heard there are kids selling pills at school - prescription medicine that either they are taking or someone in their family takes. Have you heard about kids doing this?

- ▶ **Scenario:** Your teen has started to hang out with kids you don't know and dropped his old friends.
 - ◀ **What to say:** It seems like you are hanging out with a different crowd. Is there something up with your usual friends or are you just meeting some new kids? What are your new friends like? What do they like to do? What do you like about them?



**LEARN
MORE**



Visit medicineabuseproject.org
for more conversation
starters for any age.

SAFEGUARD YOUR HOME



► Secure Medications in a Safe Place:

- Keep all medications in a safe place such as a locked cabinet or lock-box in a visible area of the house.
- Educate friends, family and others to secure medications.

► Monitor Medications:

- Track how many pills are in each prescription bottle or pack.
- Track refills for all medications in the household; including your teen's medications.
- Educate friends and family, especially grandparents, about regularly monitoring their medications.
- Dispense the proper dosage directly to your teen yourself.

► Dispose of Old or Unused Medication Properly:

- Do not dispose of medication in the garbage, or in a sink or toilet.
- Visit a local prescription drug disposal site in Oakland County - Operation Medicine Cabinet™ : www.oakgov.com/sheriff
- Remove labels from outside of prescription bottles before disposing to prevent illegal refills.
- Use Deterra personal disposal kits. Obtain by calling (248) 221-7101.

OTHER TIPS

- Talk to your children about the dangers of abusing prescription drugs. Let them know that experimenting with prescription drugs can lead to addiction, overdose or even death.
- Make sure teens understand abusing prescription drugs is illegal, including sharing them with friends.
- Be a positive role model when using prescription drugs yourself.
- Educate teens about following medication instructions and dosages.
- Supervise your child's activities, know who their friends are, and monitor their surroundings.



ABOUT
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About half of parents say anyone can access their medicine cabinet.

WHAT YOU CAN DO / PREVENTION

RESOURCES



Operation Medicine Cabinet™

An Oakland County Sheriff's Office program, which partners with local law enforcement agencies to provide locations where citizens can properly dispose of expired and/or unused prescription drugs anonymously. See oakgov.com/sheriff for disposal site locations.

Do Your Part: Be the Solution - Prevent Youth Prescription Drug Misuse

For more resources: doyourpart.info

Oakland Community Health Network

(248) 858-1210 • oaklandchn.org

Mental Health and Substance Use Access Services

(248) 464-6363 non-emergency

Common Ground Resource & Crisis Helpline

(800) 231-1127

Parent Talk Kit: Tips for Talking and What to Say to Prevent Drug and Alcohol Abuse

drugfree.org/article/how-to-talk-with-your-teen/

Talk Sooner: Helping Parents Prevent Youth Substance Abuse

talksooner.org/drugs/prescription-drugs

Prevent Prescription Drug Abuse

accessoakland.oakgov.com/pages/oakland-county-opioid-initiative

About The Alliance of Coalitions for Healthy Communities

The ACHC is an alliance of over nineteen community prevention coalitions serving forty+ local communities. The ACHC is comprised of individuals and organizations who share our commitment to building healthy and drug-free communities.



Alliance of Coalitions for Healthy Communities

(248) 221-7101 • achcmi.org

MYTH

Prescription painkillers, even if they are prescribed by a doctor, are not addictive.

FACT

Prescription pain killers act on the same site in the brain as heroin and can be highly addictive.

MYTH

There is nothing wrong with possessing prescription drugs without a prescription or sharing them with friends.

FACT

Possessing prescription drugs without a prescription could result in criminal prosecution. Illegal distribution of prescription drugs is a Federal drug violation, punishable by up to five years in Federal prison.

MYTH

Prescription medications are more difficult to obtain than illegal drugs.

FACT

Youth report that these drugs are easily obtained from family and friends in medicine cabinets, kitchen cabinets, night stands and purses.



Developmental Disabilities - Mental Health - Substance Recovery

