

The streets aren't
the only place
kids find drugs.



Sometimes they find
them right at home.

A Parents' Guide to Understanding Prescription Drug Abuse



For more information go to
www.SafeguardMyMeds.org

What Parents Can Do?...

You have much more influence on your children than you think!

They watch what you do and adopt your values. Even though they pretend that they aren't listening... they are!

Educate yourself.

Learn about which drugs kids most often abuse and recognize the signs that your child might be abusing prescription medications, including:

- Loss of interest in appearance, sports or social activities
- Cash, valuables or medication missing from the home
- Sudden mood changes
- Changes in friends
- Deceitful and secretive behavior
- Irregular schedule
- Sleeping excessively or at atypical times
- Noticeable increase in snoring

There could be other reasons not related to drug abuse for these physical and behavioral signs. Attention is warranted especially if they continue or occur in clusters.



Be more aware.

What kind of medications do you have in your household? Do you know how medications are stored in the homes of family members or friends where your child spends time?

Keep medications in a safe place.

When your child was a toddler, you probably kept powerful chemicals out of reach. Take the same approach with your medications. Your kids are just as curious as teens as they were as toddlers and peer pressure can be an added driving force.

Monitor your medications.

Always know how many pills are in your prescription bottles. Keep a written inventory to keep track.

Dispose of old or unused medications properly.

Many people hold on to prescription medications even after they have expired or are no longer needed. Different drugs need to be disposed of in different ways.

Check with your pharmacist about how to properly dispose of unneeded drugs.

Spread the word.

Once you've become informed, talk to family members, neighbors, and the parents of your children's friends and encourage them to safeguard their medications. Share information at Parent-Teacher Association meetings or other groups where parents gather.



Spend time with your teen and get to know their friends and their friends' parents.

Teens who feel a close bond with a parent or other adult are less likely to want to disappoint them.

Reinforce positive behaviors.

Encourage your child to be an independent thinker – praise him or her for having the courage to resist peer pressure and make wise choices.

Most Important— Talk to Your Children!

Make sure they know the following:

- Taking **ANY** prescription medication that is not prescribed to them by a doctor is drug abuse and it is dangerous.
- Medications are powerful drugs that can be very beneficial when taken properly under a doctor's supervision, but experimenting with prescription drugs – even once – can lead to an overdose or death. Explain that these risks increase dramatically when drugs and/or alcohol are mixed.
- Find out what they already know – what they've heard, what they've learned at school and what their friends are saying.
- Set clear standards and expectations around ALL types of substance abuse, including abuse of prescription medications. Family rules about drugs give kids something to fall back on when they are tempted to make poor decisions.



Facts and Figures

Prescription drug abuse **IS STILL DRUG ABUSE.**
Get the facts:

- Almost 2,000 teens begin abusing prescription drugs each day.¹
- More than 1 in 4 teens (27 percent) mistakenly believe that misusing and abusing prescription drugs is safer than using street drugs.²
- 1 in 4 teens (24 percent) reports having misused or abused a prescription drug at least once in their lifetime.²
- 1 in 5 (20 percent) of kids who abuse prescription drugs did so before age 14.²
- More than 68% of people age 12 and older who abuse prescription drugs say they get them from a friend or relative.¹
- Parents may be sending mixed signals to teens, as 1 in 5 parents (20 percent) indicate they have given their teen a prescription drug that was not prescribed to them.²
- The most commonly abused prescription drugs include pain medications, sleeping pills, anti-anxiety medications and stimulants (used to treat attention deficit/hyperactivity disorders).¹
- Thousands of rogue websites selling prescription drug products do not require a valid prescription.



1. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Results from the 2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings*, NSDUH Series H-46, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 13-4795. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2013. Detailed Tables available at: <http://www.samhsa.gov/data>.

2. The 2012 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study, Partnership at Drugfree.org. <http://www.drugfree.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/PATS-2012-FULL-REPORT2.pdf>



Where To Go For More Information:

Information for Parents

Partnership™ for Drug-Free Kids

www.drugfree.org

1-855-DRUGFREE

The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy

www.theantidrug.com

Key word: Prescription Drugs

RxSAFETYMATTERS

www.rxsafetymatters.org

Resources for Teachers

National Institute on Drug Abuse

www.drugabuse.gov/parent-teacher.html

National Council on Patient Information & Education

www.talkaboutrx.org

Resources for Communities

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America

www.cadca.org

Drug Disposal

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

www.fda.gov

Key word: Disposal

Substance Abuse Treatment

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

www.samhsa.gov

Key word: Treatment Information

Partnership™ for Drug-Free Kids

www.drugfree.org

1-855-DRUGFREE

Key word: Time To Get Help

For more information go to
www.SafeguardMyMeds.org




Connecticut
Prevention Network

Local partnerships promoting wellness
by addressing substance abuse statewide.

www.ctprevention.org



www.PurduePharma.com