



From the Editor

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The Medicine Abuse Project

aims to prevent half a million teens
from abusing medicine within five years.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR CHILD?

What's In Your Medicine Cabinet?

Here's an eye opener. Drug overdose surpasses car crashes as the leading cause of accidental death in the United States. Deaths totaling 452,780 and "serious outcomes" equaling 2,816,297 occurred from 2000 to 2010 states the FDA's Adverse Event Reporting System for prescription drugs. In 2007 a death occurred every 19 minutes and prescription painkillers are the biggest cause. Look at the celebrities who have died; their deaths shocked the world. And the saddest realization came when the coroner's office returned verdicts of "accidental drug overdose by mixing medications" ... **IT'S THAT BAD!**

All ages, but especially children are at risk as prescription drug abuse rises. Please support The Medicine Abuse Project sponsored by The Partnership at Drugfree.org. Its campaign to save our children launched in September and its multi-year national action campaign has teamed with some 60 strategic, federal and corporate partners to lift the veil on deaths by prescription drug abuse. The Medicine Abuse Project is committed to save a half a million teens from abusing medicine within the next five years. With medicine abuse at epidemic proportions and no regard for race, geographic or socio-economic boundaries, this project begins at home with parents. With us.

When you visit The Medicine Abuse Project at the Drugfree.org website, you'll be shocked at the information; about the role parents play in the prescription drug problem killing our kids. Not just parents, but grandparents, uncles, aunts and our neighbors and friends. Imagine how you'd feel to find out you were your child's drug dealer? The Drugfree.org website stats are boggling. Millions of parents using prescription meds are raided by their kids. Parents don't communicate the risks of prescription medicine abuse to kids as often as they talk about street drugs. Most of the time both parents and kids see prescription meds as safe.

What are prescription drugs? They are drugs prescribed for YOU not your CHILD

Vicodin, OxyContin, Concerta, Valium, Xanax, Adderall, Nembutal, Mebaral, Ambien, ProSom, Ambien, Sonata, Ritalin, Lunesta... the most abused prescription drugs. If used as directed, prescription medicine can improve health; misused the effects are deadly. Prescription drug abuse occurs when a person other than the person the prescription was intended for takes the drug and generally takes a larger dose than prescribed. Another cause of death is when one drug is taken to counteract the effect of another drug. Taking an upper-stimulant to balance out a downer-depressant. Accidental deaths from mixing prescription meds kills millions. Where can your child get prescription drugs? 65% of teens abusing prescription drugs get them from the medicine cabinet of family and friends. From any house he/ she goes to with a bathroom with a medicine cabinet or bedroom with a dresser drawer holding medication—like for instance your house. It take two seconds to see a bottle of pills, open it and take some. Teens traffic drugs among themselves; giving or selling pills of their own, or that they've stolen. Only a tiny percentage gets them from doctors, pharmacists or on the internet.

How do you know if your child is taking your prescription drugs?

Research by The Partnership at Drugfree.org and other national studies show one in five teens say they've used a prescription drug without a prescription meant for them. Reasons: to party, get high, manage life. Kids abuse stimulants like Ritalin and Adderall for energy and an ability to focus when studying or taking tests and abuse pain relievers like OxyContin and tranquilizers like Xanax to cope with academic, social or emotional stress and prescription amphetamines to lose weight, or steroids to bulk up.

How can we talk to children about the horrors of prescription drugs when kids see parents and the rest of the grown-up world use them? From TV commercials to the line-up in our medicine cabinet, society accepts the use of prescription drugs as "normal" and few parents talk with kids about the risks. Teens view prescription drugs as problem solvers for adults and for them. Stats show that both adults and teens see prescription drugs as safer than street drugs. But nothing is further from the truth. Teens—abusing prescription medicines experience dramatic increase in blood pressure and heart rate, organ damage, difficulty breathing, seizures, addiction and death. Teens abusing over-the-counter cough medicine experience fast heartbeat, high blood pressure, diarrhea, seizures, panic, drowsiness, confusion, dizziness, blurred vision, impaired physical coordination, coma and overdose. Overdosing, especially on prescription pain relievers can be fatal. Prescription opioids (pain relievers) and other prescription medicines are addictive and present life risks and life-long pattern of dependency. **SIGNS...**

- **One minute your child is happy, then withdrawn, depressed, or in a rage.**
- **Does your child need additional money for vague reasons?**
- **Have you seen your child stagger or have noticed slurred speech?**
- **Has your child given up old friends?**
- **Any changes in the pupils of your child's eyes, redness or bloodshot?**
- **Has your child given up tidiness and personal hygiene?**
- **Has your child become dishonest?**
- **Openly smoking cigarettes?**
- **Are alcoholic beverages or prescription medicines suddenly missing?**

Visit The Medicine Abuse Project at the Drugfree.org website. This NEW parents guide to preventing prescription medicine abuse will help you help your children, and maybe you'll learn a few things about yourself you never knew. ●

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