



Know! To Rx-Proof Your Students and Their Homes

Aside from prescription drug abuse being illegal, it is highly dangerous. Yet 1 in 4 high school students will use a prescription medication for non-medical reasons at least once before graduating. Youth say prescription drugs are easier to get a hold of than a six-pack of beer. So where are students getting these prescription meds? Sixty-four percent of youth report obtaining prescription drugs from their home medicine cabinets or from other family members or friends.

An essential part of preventing teen Rx drug abuse is for students to have a prescription-proofed home. You can encourage parents to do so through this simple, three-step approach:

1. **SECURE:** All medications, including over-the-counter, should be safely stored in a lock box.
2. **MONITOR:** Parents and other caregivers should know what is inside that medicine lock box and regularly monitor its contents.
3. **DISPOSE:** Properly disposing of unused or expired medication is also vital in preventing prescription drug misuse and abuse. [Click here](#) for proper disposal guidelines from the FDA. And when available, take advantage of local drug take-back programs to safely dispose of medications.

It is important for all community members to follow the safety guidelines to prescription-proof our homes, but it is especially vital for those who come in contact with children.

When it comes to prescription-proofing students however, it is definitely more challenging. In fact, aside from a child who is monitored 27/4, no teacher can ever say with certainty that a particular student is not at risk for misusing or abusing prescription drugs, regardless of academic performance or extra-curricular activities. Even star students and celebrated athletes sometimes make poor choices.

Teachers can, however, increase their students' chances for making good choices surrounding prescription drugs with these tips:

Know! Why Youth Use Rx Drugs: Most youth say they use Rx drugs to: get high, treat pain, sleep, stay awake, fit in or do better in school. Interestingly, boys are more likely to abuse Rx drugs to get high, while girls tend to use Rx drugs to stay alert or lose weight.

Talking regularly with kids about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs reduces their risk of using.

Know! urges you to encourage other parents to join Know!.

[Click here for the Know! Parent Tip Sign-Up Page.](#)

Know! is a program of:



*Lifetime Prevention
Lifetime Wellness*

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Know! The Common Rx Drugs of Abuse: The most commonly abused drugs by youth include prescription pain medication, anti-anxiety or sleep medication, medication to treat ADHD and over-the-counter cough or cold medicine.

Dispel Rx Drug Myths: The majority of youth believe Rx drugs are safer than illicit street drugs, but that is FALSE. Make sure your students are aware that Rx drugs can be just as dangerous, addictive and damaging to one's developing body and mind, as illicit street drugs.

Communicate Regularly: Talk openly with your students about the hazards of Rx drug abuse. Ask them what they know and want to know on the subject, and if you don't have the answer, research it and get back with them. When your students speak, listen carefully.

Rx medication abuse remains a significant part of the teen drug problem. You are in a position to positively impact the lives of your students by guiding them toward making healthy decisions, such as choosing not to misuse or abuse drugs of any kind. While parents have the ability to eliminate access and availability in the home, you have the ability to lead and keep this critical conversation going, among peers, in the classroom.

If a student or anyone else you know is in need of Rx drug intervention or support, call the Treatment Referral Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP or visit www.samhsa.gov/treatment.

For community resources from Cardinal Health's Generation Rx, visit <http://www.cardinalhealth.com/us/en/generationrx>.

Sources: [Cardinal Health: Generation Rx: Prescription Drug Abuse and Your Teens](#). [NIDA for Teens: Drug Facts – Prescription Drugs](#). [Drug Use is Life Abuse: Douglas County Sheriff's Advisory Council: Drug Proofing Your Home](#).