



PRESCRIPTION DRUG MISUSE PREVENTION



**ALLIANCE
OF COALITIONS**
for Healthy Communities



PREVENT

Youth Prescription Drug Misuse

**Toolkit For
Parents & Caregivers**



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OF COALITIONS
for Healthy Communities

ABOUT THE ALLIANCE & THIS TOOLKIT

The Alliance is a network of 21+ community prevention coalitions serving 55+ local communities. The Alliance is comprised of individuals and organizations who share our commitment to building healthy and drug-free communities. This toolkit is a resource to help educate on making healthy choices including how to take preventative measures and reduce risk factors for substance abuse.



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HOW RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS CAN INFLUENCE A TEEN'S SUBSTANCE USE

WHAT ARE RISK FACTORS?

Risk factors are characteristics at the biological, psychological, family, community, or cultural level that precede and are associated with a higher likelihood of negative outcomes. Risk factors can include, lack of adult supervision, mental health problems, abuse, divorce or traumatic events.

WHAT ARE PROTECTIVE FACTORS?

Protective factors are seen as positive events that counter risk factors. Protective factors lower the likelihood of those negative outcomes.

HOW TO BUILD PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR YOUR CHILD

- Provide structure, rules and family rules.
- Create supportive relationships with all family members.
- Set clear expectations for behavior and values.
- Build self-esteem.
- Practice positive coping skills and problem solving.
- Support engagement and connections with others (peers, mentors, coaches and teachers).
- Build on resiliency or the ability to effectively manage life's challenges.

As a parent, it is important to also take care of you. Seek support from other parents, take time for self-care and seek assistance from your community when needed.

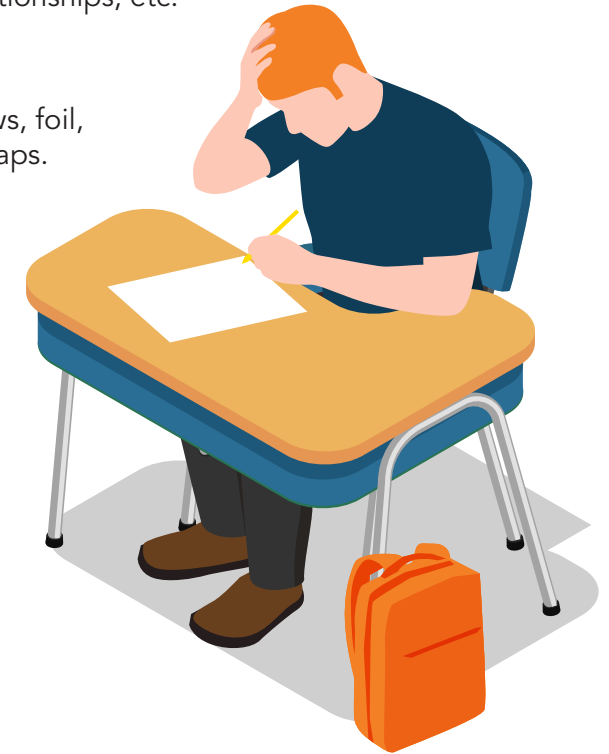
Sources; <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/20190718-samhsa-risk-protective-factors.pdf> ; <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/youth-mental-health/risk-and-protective-factors-youth>

DID YOU KNOW?

- Over 1,600 teens begin abusing prescription drugs each day.
Source: <https://www.turnbridge.com/news-events/latest-articles/teen-prescription-drug-abuse/>
- 57% of 12 to 17 year olds who misused prescription opioids got them from a friend or relative. The majority of teens get prescription drugs easily and for free, often from friends or relatives.
Source: <https://www.drugabuse.gov>
- Every 11 minutes someone in America dies from an opioid overdose.
Source: <https://www.thetruth.com/the-facts/fact-1005>
- 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.”
Source: <https://drugfree.org>
- Fake prescription pills are easily accessible and often sold on social media and e-commerce platforms, making them available to anyone with a smartphone.
Source: <https://www.dea.gov/onepill>
- 6 out of 10 fake prescription pills contain a potentially lethal dose of fentanyl.
Source: <https://www.dea.gov/onepill>
- Rates of illicit prescription pill use are now highest among people ages 18 to 25.
Source: <https://www.dea.gov/onepill>
- 62% of teenagers say they choose to abuse prescription drugs because they’re easy to get from parents’ medicine cabinets.
Source: <https://drugabusestatistics.org>

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.



Source: <https://drugabuse.com/symptoms-signs-drug-abuse-effects/>

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 use of other substances, including alcohol.



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

<https://www.romi.gov/1348/Opioids>

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 them 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 their 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 by visiting [medicineabuseproject.org](https://www.medicineabuseproject.org) for more conversation starters for any age.

SAFEGUARD YOUR HOME

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

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 (go to Community Services tab to find link to Operation Medicine Cabinet).
- Remove labels from outside of prescription bottles before disposing to prevent illegal refills.
- Use Detera 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.



MYTH OR FACT?

MYTH

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

FACT

Prescription painkillers 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.

RESOURCES

SAVE A LIFE

Free Narcan Trainings

achcmi.org

OPERATION MEDICINE CABINET™

An Oakland County Sheriff's Office program, where citizens can properly dispose of expired and/or unused prescription drugs anonymously. See oakgov.com/sheriff for disposal site locations.

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

SOBER SUPPORT UNIT

(248) 456-8144

PARENT TALK KIT

Tips For Talking And What To Say to Prevent Drug and Alcohol Abuse

drugfree.org/article/connecting-with-your-teen

TALK SOONER

Helping Parents Prevent Youth Substance Abuse

talksooner.org/drugs/prescription-drugs



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