



## TEENS are abusing prescription drugs they find at home

***The good news is that overall, teen drug use is down nationwide. But did you know that more teens abuse prescription drugs than any other illicit drug, except marijuana; more than cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine combined?***

Most teens who abuse prescription drugs report getting them from home, or from friends and relatives. Not all drug threats to our teens come from the street corner. Let's face it, prescription drugs are in practically every home.

- Every day, 2,500 kids age 12-17 try a painkiller for the first time.
- Teens abuse prescription drugs more than any illicit street drug except marijuana.
- Drug treatment admissions for prescription painkillers increased more than 300% from 1995 to 2005.
- Prescription drugs are the drugs of choice for 12 and 13 year olds.

*"When used as prescribed, prescription painkillers can be tremendously beneficial. But their abuse is becoming a serious public health and addiction problem. We may be unintentionally providing our teens a new way to get high," said John P. Walters, Director, National Drug Control Policy.*

***Research shows many parents are not aware of teen prescription drug abuse and are not discussing the dangers with their teens. Only a third of parents (36%) have discussed the risks of prescription drugs with their teen, even though research shows that parental disapproval is a powerful way to keep teens away from using drugs.***

Parents, you are still the number one influence when it comes to these decisions. You can have an immediate impact on stopping teen prescription drug abuse. Here are some ways to start:

- ✓ **Safeguard all drugs at home.** Monitor quantities and control access.
- ✓ **Set clear rules for teens about all drug use,** including not sharing medicine and always following the medical provider's advice and dosages.
- ✓ **Be a good role model** by following the same rules with your own medicines.
- ✓ **Properly conceal and dispose** of old or unused medicines in the trash.
- ✓ **Ask family and friends** to safeguard their prescription drugs as well.

Contact Phoebe to find out more about our FREE parenting classes offered each Spring and Fall. *Staying Connected with Your Teen* - starts February, 26<sup>th</sup> from 6-8 pm at Mt. Si High School.

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To see the full report: "Prescription for Danger: A Report on Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drug Abuse Among the Nation's Teens."

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