Get Smart
Take Action

Teen Prescription (Rx) Drug Abuse Awareness
School Tool Kit
Welcome

Working together to safeguard middle- and high-school teens from prescription (Rx) drug abuse.
School Nurses
Principals
Teachers
Parents
Teens

Working together
to safeguard middle- and high-school teens from prescription (Rx) drug abuse
Hello.

Thanks for your interest in the important topic of teen prescription (Rx) drug abuse.

The National Association of School Nurses, with our sponsoring partner, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc., is pleased to bring you this Tool Kit as part of the Smart Moves, Smart Choices awareness program.

The abuse of prescription drugs can profoundly affect the lives of teens, resulting in serious health consequences—including addiction and even death. Abuse and addiction also can impact academic performance and relationships with friends and family.

This Tool Kit provides simple-to-use tools that can help educators like you begin a conversation about teen prescription drug abuse in schools—whether by holding assemblies or incorporating the topic into lesson plans.

We’re proud to say that addiction expert Dr. Drew Pinsky has participated in this initiative, and he leads a discussion about teen prescription drug abuse in the school assembly videos provided in this kit.

Best of luck to you as you begin a dialogue in your school about teen prescription drug abuse. We look forward to keeping in touch and hearing about your successes.

Using our collective wisdom and resources, we can help keep teens healthy, safe, and ready to learn.

In partnership,

Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

Commitment to Credibility

All of the statistics cited in this Tool Kit are taken from accurate and credible sources including the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (SAMHSA) and the Partnership at Drugfree.org’s Partnership Attitude Tracking Study (PATS).
Teen Prescription Drug Abuse: A Problem of Our Time

It’s time to address a problem that’s affecting millions of students in schools across America: Teen Prescription Drug Abuse.

Here’s the reality: 1 in 4 teens report that they have taken a prescription medication that was not prescribed for them by a doctor, for the purpose of getting high or for any other reason.1

Help to reverse this disturbing trend right now.

School professionals are in an excellent position to inform, influence, and empower teens and their parents. We know you are busy, but the problem is too important to ignore and will not go away on its own.

We’ve designed this Tool Kit to be simple, clear, comprehensive, and easy to use.

Stay with us.

Read on.

We are with you every step of the way.

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Reproduction Permission

This Tool Kit is intended to help schools implement teen prescription drug abuse awareness programs and reach as many students as possible with important messages about this growing problem.

With this educational purpose goal in mind, schools have express permission by the National Association of School Nurses and Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc., to reproduce any and all materials found in this kit for their awareness efforts.
Discover
What’s Inside This Tool Kit

Flexible Approach
Because every school has different needs and available resources, this Tool Kit is designed to be easy to use and to offer schools a great deal of flexibility.

Using this Tool Kit, each school can choose the tools and approach that works best for them.

This Tool Kit contains the following materials:

School Assembly Materials
Included are the necessary materials and guidance for schools to hold a *Smart Moves, Smart Choices* assembly on the topic of teen prescription drug abuse.

- Event planning guidance
- Event preparation checklist
- Sample speaker remarks
- The *Smart Moves, Smart Choices* school assembly video series, featuring Dr. Drew Pinsky
- School assembly flier (can be customized)

Lesson Plan Materials
Included are lesson plans and videos to enable schools to incorporate the subject of teen prescription drug abuse into the curriculum. It includes:

- *the.Medic video series:* five news-style videos about teen prescription drug abuse from the perspective of teens in recovery, teachers, parents, and addiction experts
- **Lesson plans** that accompany the videos
Step 1: Discover What’s Inside This Tool Kit

Year-Round Awareness Materials

Included are resources to help heighten student and parent awareness of teen prescription drug abuse.

- **Posters** aimed at students and adults that can be hung in administration and nurses’ offices, classrooms, and hallways
- **Stickers** students can wear to demonstrate awareness
- **Parent Flier** that the school can send home

Evaluation Tools

Your feedback is important to us, and we’d like to know if the tools are useful and have an impact on student awareness. Included in this kit are survey tools designed to help us understand what knowledge students are taking away from assemblies and lesson plans.

**The tools include:**

- The **Student Pre-Test**, to gather information about students’ baseline knowledge of teen prescription drug abuse before they participate in school assemblies and lesson plans
- The **Student Post-Test**, to gather student understanding of teen prescription drug abuse after they have participated in school assemblies and lesson plans
- An **Educator Survey**, to gather feedback from the school professionals who are utilizing this Tool Kit
Smart Tools DVD

Most of the tools you will need to hold Smart Moves, Smart Choices teen prescription drug abuse awareness activities are found on the enclosed Smart Tools DVD.

Any time you see this Smart Tools icon, you will know that the tool mentioned can be found on the enclosed Smart Tools DVD.

The Smart Tools DVD includes the following resources:

- **Videos**
  - *the.Medic* video series
  - *Smart Moves, Smart Choices* assembly video series featuring Dr. Drew Pinsky

- **Fliers**
  - School assembly flier (can be customized)
  - Parent awareness flier (reproduce and distribute to parents)

- **School Assembly Speaker Notes**
  - Video assembly sample notes
  - Local speaker assembly sample notes

- **Tests/Surveys**
  - Student pre-test
  - Student post-test
  - Educator survey
Understand
Teen Prescription Drug Abuse

A Problem of Our Time
Many parents used to fear that their children would abuse or become addicted to illegal “street” drugs like marijuana or cocaine. But today, millions of teenagers are turning to a different option—prescription medications, like those found in medicine cabinets.

Teen prescription drug abuse is a serious and growing problem in the United States.

- 1 in 4 teens has taken a prescription drug that was not prescribed for them by a doctor, for the purpose of getting high or for any other reason
- Every day, 2,500 young people use a prescription pain reliever for a non-medical use for the first time

What Is Teen Prescription Drug Abuse?
Teen prescription drug abuse is when a young person uses prescription medication that was prescribed for someone else—to get high or for any other reason than the medication’s intended purpose.

When used under the care of a doctor, at an appropriate dosage, for a legitimate medical reason, prescription medications can provide time-honored benefits and are effective for many people. However, any abuse of prescription drugs (or over-the-counter medications) is highly unsafe and illegal.

More teens abuse prescription drugs than they do illegal drugs, except for marijuana


Step 2: Understand Teen Prescription Drug Abuse
Where Do Teens Get Prescription Medications?

Most teens say they get their hands on prescription drugs from the homes of friends and relatives. In fact, access to medications can be as easy as opening a medicine cabinet, drawer, or kitchen cupboard in a teen’s own home or a relative’s house.

Taking Prescription Medications Is Not a Safe Way to Get High

Any abuse of drugs—be they illicit, prescription, or over-the-counter—is highly unsafe. Many teens, however, mistakenly believe that using prescription drugs to get high is safer than taking illegal drugs like cocaine or heroin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prescription Drugs</th>
<th>Over-the-Counter Drugs</th>
<th>Illegal Drugs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preservation drugs are the same as prescription medications</td>
<td>Over-the-counter (OTC) drugs or medications are available in pharmacies and drugstores (examples include aspirin and cold and allergy medications)</td>
<td>Illegal drugs include substances like heroin, cocaine, ecstasy, and marijuana and can be dangerous, even fatal, if taken just one time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When prescribed for a person by a doctor, for a legitimate medical reason, they can be safe and effective</td>
<td>OTC drugs can be purchased without a prescription by individuals who are suffering from a medical condition</td>
<td>Taking these drugs in any quantity is dangerous and illegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescription drugs should be taken only by the person for whom they were prescribed and at the recommended dosage</td>
<td>OTC drugs usually come in lower dosages than prescription medications and should be taken only at the recommended dosage on the package</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is illegal and dangerous to take a prescription drug that was not prescribed for you, even if you do it just one time</td>
<td>When abused, OTC medications can be extremely dangerous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 2: Understand Teen Prescription Drug Abuse
Serious Risk to Teens

Teen prescription drug abuse can result in addiction, serious health issues, and even death.

Mixing prescription drugs with alcohol and illegal drugs like cocaine and marijuana is particularly dangerous and can be fatal.

Teen prescription drug abuse can impact young people’s developing brains, their relationships with family and friends, and their academic performance.

Abusing prescription medications is not necessarily safer than using illegal “street” drugs like cocaine or heroin.

Research shows that teens who learn a lot about the risks of drugs from their parents are up to 50% less likely to use drugs.

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Which Prescription Medications Are Most Commonly Abused?

**Opioids** – Medication commonly known as prescription painkillers
- Repeated use can lead to addiction
- Taking a large single dose can cause severe respiratory depression that can lead to death

**Stimulants** – Such as medications that treat Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Repeated use of some stimulants over a short period can lead to feelings of hostility or paranoia
- High doses may result in a dangerously high temperature and an irregular heartbeat
- Potential for heart failure or seizures
- Combining stimulants and over-the-counter cold medicines with decongestants may cause dangerously high blood pressure and an irregular heart rhythm

**Sedatives** – Such as anti-anxiety and sleep-disorder medications
- Slowed brain activity can result in sleepiness and lack of coordination during first days of taking depressants
- Continued use can lead to dependence
- Use with alcohol can be fatal

For a comprehensive list of the signs and symptoms of prescription medication abuse visit
www.SmartMovesSmartChoices.org/educators

Step 2: Understand Teen Prescription Drug Abuse
Myths and Facts About Teen Prescription Drug Abuse:

**Myth:** Teen prescription drug abuse is uncommon.

**Fact:** The abuse of prescription medications among youth ages 12 to 17 is widespread. After marijuana, prescription drugs are the most commonly abused drugs among young people.

**Myth:** Because prescription drugs are legal, they are a safer way to get high.

**Fact:** Prescription drugs should only be taken for legitimate medical reasons, by the person they were prescribed for, and at the proper dosage instructed by the doctor. When abused, prescription drugs can be as dangerous as taking illegal drugs like heroin or cocaine.

**Myth:** It’s okay to misuse or abuse a prescription medication once in a while.

**Fact:** It is never safe to misuse or abuse a prescription medication. Any time a prescription drug is taken improperly, for the purpose of getting high or for any other reason, it is dangerous and illegal. Abusing a prescription drug even just one time can lead to serious health consequences—even death.

**Myth:** It is difficult to access prescription medications in order to get high.

**Fact:** Accessing prescription medications can be as easy as going into a parent’s or family member’s medicine cabinet, drawer, or cupboard. Some teens get them from friends. For many young people, accessing prescription drugs can be free or inexpensive.

Step 2: Understand Teen Prescription Drug Abuse
Educators Can Make a Difference

Because students attend school every day, teachers, principals, and school nurses may be able to notice changes or problems in teens even before parents do. Educators are in a perfect position to educate students about the dangers of prescription drug abuse and address any problem situations that they notice.

Educators can:

1. Be Aware of Changes in Students
   Look for the signs and symptoms of prescription drug abuse in your students, including physical, behavioral, and academic changes.

2. Implement Awareness Programs
   Let students know that the school takes prescription drug abuse seriously and implement awareness programs aimed at students, teachers, and parents. Help students understand the risks and consequences of prescription drug abuse by holding school assemblies and implementing lesson plans.

3. Get Parents Involved
   Educate parents about teen prescription drug abuse and encourage them to:
   - Safeguard teens by restricting access to prescription medications in the home. Take all prescription medications out of accessible areas and put them in a safe, locked location
   - Stress that prescription medications should NEVER be shared
   - Inform grandparents, other relatives, and neighbors about this issue and encourage them to lock up all medications in their homes
   - Begin a dialogue with teenagers about prescription drug abuse and encourage open, honest, and nonjudgmental communication
   - Properly dispose of all unused or expired prescription medications
   - Learn to recognize the signs of abuse
   - Be good role models

Take Action!

This Tool Kit offers three options for schools to raise awareness of teen prescription drug abuse.

A. Hold a School Assembly

B. Incorporate Teen Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Lesson Plans Into the Curriculum

C. Utilize Awareness Tools Year-Round
A. Hold a School Assembly

The Value of Holding a School Assembly About Teen Prescription Drug Abuse

Taking time out of the regular school day to hold a school assembly highlighting the risks of teen prescription drug abuse will help stress the importance of this issue to students and their parents.

Although hosting an assembly takes some planning, it is worthwhile and will:

- Demonstrate the school administration’s commitment to safeguarding students from prescription drug abuse
- Emphasize the importance of the topic—to students, their parents, and the community
- Enable students to hear real people discussing the topic from a variety of perspectives—a respected addiction expert; a school administrator; a peer who has abused prescription medication; a parent; a school nurse; etc
- Spark conversation and further consideration about the topic of prescription drug abuse among students

The following pages provide you with the necessary information and tools to help you create a school assembly about teen prescription drug abuse that is interesting, educational and engaging.

One third of all new prescription drug abusers in 2006 were 12 to 17 year olds.

There are two ways to construct your school assembly:

**Hold an Assembly Using the Smart Moves, Smart Choices Videos**

**Or**

**Hold an Assembly Using Local Speakers**

It is recommended that you hold assemblies with grade levels that are not more than one year apart, so that the audience includes students of similar age and maturity.

64% of teens (ages 12-17) who abuse prescription pain relievers say they got them from friends or relatives.

Hold an Assembly Using the Smart Moves, Smart Choices Videos

If you opt to hold a video assembly, you can construct an event using the videos featuring addiction expert Dr. Drew Pinsky that are found on the Smart Tools DVD in this kit.

This approach calls for the school to:

- Coordinate event logistics
- Identify a facilitator to host the event, introduce the topic, and lead the discussion. This person might be the school principal, school nurse, or a teacher
- Use the sample speaker remarks provided on the Smart Tools DVD
- Show a selection of the Smart Moves, Smart Choices school assembly videos
- Hold a Q&A/discussion session at the end of the program
- Administer the student pre- and post-tests and mail the completed tests and educator survey back to the National Association of School Nurses (instructions on pages 32-33)

Time needed: Approximately 45 minutes (or shorter)

Considerations:

- Offers school flexibility to choose which videos to show, and to hold multiple assemblies throughout the year featuring different videos
- May take less time to coordinate because school does not have to identify and confirm local speakers

Tools you will need:

- Smart Moves, Smart Choices video series, found on the Smart Tools DVD
- Video assembly agenda and speaker notes and assembly flier, found on the Smart Tools DVD
- Assembly host/facilitator (Principal, School Nurse, Teacher)

The Sample Assembly Agenda and Speaker Notes can be found on the Smart Tools DVD

Step 3: Take Action! Hold An Assembly Using Videos
Choose which videos to show

The Smart Moves, Smart Choices video series was filmed at a live school assembly at a high school in Los Angeles and features addiction expert Dr. Drew Pinsky and a recovering teen.

Depending on your preference and how much time you have available for the video assembly, you can show several of the videos.

Here are suggested groupings, but please feel free to pick and choose in order to tailor the video assembly to the specific needs of your school.

**Core Assembly Videos**

Choose from following videos:

- **Teen Prescription Drug Abuse**
  Dr. Drew’s overview of this serious issue and the risks and consequences.
  *Running Time: 4:21*

- **What Is Addiction?**
  Dr. Drew leads an in-depth conversation about drug addiction and the differences between abuse and addiction.
  *Running Time: 4:16*

- **Why Teens Abuse**
  Dr. Drew engages students in a compelling discussion about why teens abuse prescription drugs.
  *Running Time: 3:23*

- **Kyle’s Story**
  Kyle Rumple shares his absorbing story of drug abuse and recovery.
  *Running Time: 4:11*

- **What Parents Can Do**
  Dr. Drew offers tips for parents to safeguard their kids from prescription drug abuse.
  *Running Time: 4:12*

**Suggested Video Groupings for Your School Assembly:**

- **Smart Moves Assembly Video Series Featuring Dr. Drew Pinsky**
- **Core Assembly Videos**
  - Choose from following videos:
    - **Teen Prescription Drug Abuse**
      Dr. Drew’s overview of this serious issue and its risks and consequences.
      *Running Time: 4:21*
    - **What Is Addiction?**
      Dr. Drew leads an in-depth conversation about drug addiction and the differences between abuse and addiction.
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      Dr. Drew engages students in a compelling discussion about why teens abuse prescription drugs.
      *Running Time: 3:23*
    - **Kyle’s Story**
      Kyle Rumple shares his absorbing story of drug abuse and recovery.
      *Running Time: 4:11*

- **If There Is More Time Available If You Hold an Assembly for Parents Only**
  Choose from following videos:
  - **Q&A with Kyle**
    Recovered prescription drug abuser Kyle Rumple fields questions and opens up about his experience.
    *Running Time: 3:29*
  - **Q&A With Dr. Drew**
    Dr. Drew fields questions from students and parents in this honest exchange.
    *Running Time: 3:33*
  - **Smart Moves for Teens**
    Dr. Drew offers useful advice on how teens can handle situations involving prescription drugs.
    *Running Time: 2:26*
# Video Groupings for Your School Assembly:

**Smart Moves, Smart Choices Assembly Video Series Featuring Dr. Drew Pinsky**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If There Is More Time Available</th>
<th>If You Hold an Assembly for Parents Only</th>
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</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 3: Take Action! Hold An Assembly Using Videos**
Hold an Assembly Using Local Speakers

If you opt to create a customized assembly, you will coordinate the event and need to identify local speakers.

This approach calls for the school to:

- Coordinate event logistics
- Identify local speakers (e.g., recovering teen, parent of recovering teen, elected official, health professional)
- Utilize the sample speaker notes provided on the Smart Tools DVD as a guide for your program
- Hold a Q&A/discussion session at program conclusion
- Administer the student pre- and post-tests and mail the completed tests and educator survey back to the National Association of School Nurses (instructions on pages 32-33)

Suggested guest speakers to invite:

- **Local recovering teen**: this could be a student from your school or from a local treatment program (permission from the treatment program would be necessary)
- **Parent of a recovering teen**
- **Local elected official** (such as the mayor or deputy mayor)
- **Local health professional** (physician, psychologist, nurse, or certified counselor specializing in addiction and recovery)
Step 3: Take Action! Hold An Assembly Using Local Speakers

Considerations:

- Including local speakers can be valuable to build community awareness and involvement in the issue. Teens can relate to a firsthand perspective from someone who has “been there,” such as a recovering teen or a parent of a recovering teen. This can bolster the information provided in the assembly.

- May take more time to coordinate the event due to the multiple speakers involved and scheduling considerations.

Time needed for assembly:
45 minutes (or shorter)

Tools you will need:

- Suggested assembly agenda and speaker notes and assembly flier (found on the Smart Tools DVD)

- Myth Busters video from the.Medic video series (found on the Smart Tools DVD)

- Other videos from the.Medic video series or the Smart Moves, Smart Choices assembly video series featuring Dr. Drew Pinsky, if you choose to show more than one

The Sample Assembly Agenda and Speaker Notes can be found on the Smart Tools DVD

41 percent of teens mistakenly believe that prescription drugs are safer to use than illegal drugs like cocaine or heroin.

School Assembly Checklist

1-2 months before

**If Creating Your Own Assembly:**
- Identify local speakers and choose a date that works for everyone

**If Holding a Video Assembly:**
- Identify selected videos to show, decide if principal or school nurse should lead the assembly, and choose a date that works for everyone

**For Both:**
- Identify the room you will use and schedule it with the person responsible
- Make sure the assembly is listed on the school calendar and on the school’s Web site

2-3 weeks before

- Make copies of the speaker notes and provide them to all participating speakers

Step 3: Take Action! Hold An Assembly
Step 3: Take Action! Hold An Assembly

1-2 weeks before

- Promote the assembly. Post fliers (found on the Smart Tools DVD) in the hallways, cafeteria, nurse’s office, and administrative offices
- Distribute the awareness flier to parents. You can send it home with the students or send out the flier in an e-mail message. An electronic copy of the flier is found on the Smart Tools DVD
- Coordinate all of your A/V needs for the assembly

Before and on the day of assembly

- A few days before: Make copies of the student pre- and post-tests
- Before the assembly starts, make sure the equipment is working properly
- On the day of: Administer the student pre- and post-tests (Option: you may administer the student pre-test a week in advance if you choose)
### Percentage of Teens Who Have Tried:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescription Drugs</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhalants</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cough Medicine</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crack/Cocaine</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecstasy</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSD</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meth</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketamine</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHB</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another way to raise awareness of teen prescription drug abuse is by incorporating the subject into the school curriculum.

As part of the Smart Moves, Smart Choices program, the National Association of School Nurses and Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc., partnered with MacNeil/Lehrer Productions and a team of educational consultants to create a series of five educational videos and accompanying lesson plans that deal with the topic of teen prescription drug abuse. The series is called the.Medic and is part of MacNeil/Lehrer’s the.News series for young adults.

the.Medic video series takes a news-based approach to the topic of teen prescription drug abuse. Each video has an accompanying lesson plan that is available to be downloaded from the Internet and printed as a hard copy for the teacher. Find the web links to the lesson plans on pages 24-25 of this Tool Kit.

The videos and lesson plans are designed for use in the following class areas:

- English/language arts
- Science/media literacy
- Health education

3.2 million high school students in 2009 reported that they had abused a prescription medication at least once in their lives.11

Following are descriptions of the series of **the.Medic** videos, which are all supported by accompanying lesson plans that can be used by teachers in middle and high school classrooms. The videos can be found on the enclosed *Smart Tools* DVD and the lesson plans can be accessed and downloaded free-of-charge from the provided URLs.

### Myth Busting
*Running Time: 4:30*

Introduces the increasing problem of prescription drug abuse and offers insights into teens’ common beliefs.

**Lesson Plan 1: Myth Busting**

### Science of Addiction
*Running Time: 5:35*

When used improperly, prescription pain medications can be addictive. Learn more about addiction and the effects of prescription drug abuse on the developing brain.

**Lesson Plan 2: Science of Addiction**
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/materials/med_science_lesson.pdf
Changes for Life
Running Time: 4:01
Teens tell their stories of how prescription drug abuse has impacted their relationships, studies, and social lives.
Lesson Plan 3: Changes for Life

Media Literacy
Running Time: 3:01
Media literacy experts discuss how to analyze mixed messages about drugs in popular culture.
Lesson Plan 4: Media Literacy

What Parents Should Know
Running Time: 5:53
This video gives guidance on how parents can recognize the signs of abuse, communicate with teens, and access help.
Lesson Plan 5: What Parents Should Know
C. Make a Difference Year-Round

Following are suggested ways in which schools can educate students and parents about teen prescription drug abuse throughout the year.

Hang Posters in Your School

Raise awareness of teen prescription drug abuse throughout the entire school. Hang the enclosed awareness posters on walls in the hallways, school nurse’s office, health education classrooms, and the administration office. There is one version geared toward adults and one toward teens.

Two hard-copy posters are provided in this Tool Kit.
Distribute Fliers to Parents

Many parents and relatives are not aware that teen prescription drug abuse is a growing trend and that the young people in their lives may be abusing prescription drugs. In many cases, teens are accessing prescription drugs right in their own homes—from the medicine cabinet—or from a friend’s or family member’s home.

The good news is that with awareness and understanding, there are ways that parents can get involved and take action right away. The most immediate way is to make sure that all prescription medications are kept in a safe or even a locked location in the home.

The enclosed flier can be photocopied and distributed to parents, caregivers, and guardians. This flier provides basic information about the risks and consequences of teen prescription drug abuse and ways by which adults can safeguard their children.

A master copy of the parent flier is provided in the Tool Kit and a PDF can be found on the Smart Tools DVD.

Encourage School Newspaper/Newsletter Articles

Another great way to engage students to become involved in and aware of the issue of teen prescription drug abuse awareness is to encourage them to write articles about the topic for the student newspaper.

Types of articles might include:

- News article about the school assembly
- General feature article about the issue
- Opinion Editorial (op-ed) about the dangers of prescription drug abuse

Students can visit the Smart Moves, Smart Choices Web site—www.SmartMovesSmartChoices.org—to research facts about the topic and to access additional resources.

Step 3: Take Action! Make A Difference Year-Round
Highlight Teen Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness on the School’s Web Site Homepage

Schools with Web sites may wish to include information about teen prescription drug abuse on their homepages to heighten awareness of the topic among students and parents.

**Suggested Web site blurb:**

*Teen prescription (Rx) drug abuse is a serious and growing problem in the United States. According to a survey, one in four high school students has taken a prescription drug that was not prescribed for them by a doctor. Every day, 2,500 young people use a prescription pain reliever to get high for the first time.*

*Many teens do not realize that abusing prescription medications or mixing prescription medications with alcohol can cause serious health consequences—even death. It’s important that parents be aware of this issue and monitor teens’ access to prescription drugs.*

**Here’s what parents can do to take action right now:**

1. Take all prescription medications out of the medicine cabinet and secure them in a safe place. Encourage relatives, especially grandparents, to do the same.
2. Have an ongoing dialogue with their teens.
3. Learn to recognize the signs of abuse by visiting [www.SmartMovesSmartChoices.org](http://www.SmartMovesSmartChoices.org)
Declare a Teen Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Day

- Hold a school assembly in October to coincide with National Medicine Abuse Awareness Month
- Distribute the enclosed stickers to students who attend the assembly

Sheets of stickers are provided in this Tool Kit.

Be aware. Don’t share Rx.

SNAP
Say No to Abusing Prescriptions
SmartMovesSmartChoices.org

Don’t share Rx.

Small things can be deadly.

Step 3: Take Action! Make A Difference Year-Round
Dispose of Medications Properly

Schools are cornerstones of their communities and can help get the word out about important issues, such as the proper disposal of unused or expired medications.

Most families are likely to find expired and unused prescription and over-the-counter medications in their medicine cabinets. Having unused or expired medications in the home can be tempting and potentially dangerous to children and teenagers.

Benefits of Proper Disposal

**Environmental Safety:** Proper disposal prevents medications from leaching into our water systems and potentially harming humans and wildlife.

**Human Safety:** Proper disposal prevents medication from being stolen, resold or mistakenly getting in the hands of young children or teens.

**According to Federal Guidelines:**

- **Do not flush.** Prescription drugs should not be flushed down the toilet or drain unless the label or accompanying patient information specifically instructs you to do so.

- **Dispose properly.** To safeguard teens and pets, take pills out of their original containers and mix them with an undesirable substance such as kitty litter or coffee grounds. Sometimes teens will search the garbage can for prescription drugs. This step will help discourage that from happening. Put this mixture into a sealed bag or empty can and dispose into the garbage.

The following links offer guidelines on how to dispose of unused medicines properly:

- [www.fda.gov/forconsumers/consumerupdates/ucm101653.htm](http://www.fda.gov/forconsumers/consumerupdates/ucm101653.htm)
Participate in Drug Take-Back Programs

Another safe way to dispose of medications is to take advantage of community drug take-back programs or other programs, such as household hazardous waste collection events, which collect drugs at a central location for proper disposal.

- Call your city or county government’s household trash and recycling service to locate a drug take-back program near you
- Visit the following Web sites to locate a take-back program in your community:
  - The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
    www.justice.gov/dea
  - The American Medicine Chest Challenge
    www.americanmedicinechest.com
  - Dispose My Meds
    www.disposemymeds.org

It’s important to understand that when medications are no longer needed, they must be disposed of properly to ensure environmental and human safety.

61% of teens ages 12-17 who have abused prescription painkillers first tried them before age 15.

Measure Impact

Important Information About the Enclosed Tests/Survey

 Included in this Tool Kit are:
1. Student Pre-Test
2. Student Post-Test
3. Educator Survey

We’d like to know what your students have learned from the teen prescription drug abuse educational programs so we can better evaluate the impact of this program.

With this goal in mind, please partner with us and make certain to have students complete the pre- and post-tests in conjunction with school assembly or lesson-plan activities.

Student Pre-Test

- Photocopy or print the pre-test (a master hard copy is provided in this kit as well as on the Smart Tools DVD)
- Ask students to complete the pre-test during one of the following times:
  - the week before the student assembly is held or the lesson plan is taught
  - the day of the assembly or lesson plan (before beginning)

The student tests can be found on the Smart Tools DVD.
Student Post-Test

- Photocopy or print the post-test (a master hard copy is provided in this kit as well as on the Smart Tools DVD)

- Ask students to complete the post-test during one of the following times:
  - the day of the student assembly or lesson plan (at the end of the program)
  - a week later

Educator Survey

- At the end of the assembly or lesson plan activities, the educator(s) who leads the Smart Moves, Smart Choices teen prescription drug abuse awareness efforts at the school should complete the enclosed evaluation survey

- Please return the evaluation survey along with the completed student tests to the National Association of School Nurses.

The student tests and educator survey can be found on the Smart Tools DVD.

After the tests and educator survey are collected, please return them to:

National Association of School Nurses
Smart Moves, Smart Choices Test/Surveys
8484 Georgia Avenue / Suite 420
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Don’t forget to collect all of the tests and surveys and mail them to us in the envelope provided!

More than 3 in 5 teens say prescription pain relievers are easy to get from a parent’s medicine cabinet.  

Step 4: Measure Impact

Other Helpful Resources

For Parents and Educators

**CADCA (Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America)**
www.cadca.org

**D.A.R.E.**
www.dare.org

**HOME TO HOMEROOM**
www.stopmedicineabuse.org/home-to-homeroom

**THE PARTNERSHIP AT DRUGFREE.ORG**
www.drugfree.org

**TIME TO TALK**
www.timetotalk.org

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT FACILITY LOCATOR**
www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov

For Teens

**ABOVE THE INFLUENCE**
www.abovetheinfluence.com

**CHECK YOURSELF**
www.checkyourself.com
Posters (2)
Parent Flier (1)
School Assembly Flier (1)
Tests (2)
Stickers

Smart Tools DVD (includes):

- **Videos**
  - *the.Medic* video series
  - *Smart Moves, Smart Choices* assembly video series with Dr. Drew Pinsky

- **Fliers**
  - Parent awareness flier (reproduce and distribute to parents)
  - School assembly flier (can be customized)

- **Assembly Sample Agenda & Speaker Notes**
  - Video assembly notes
  - Local speaker assembly notes

- **Tests/Surveys**
  - Student pre-test
  - Student post-test
  - Educator survey

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**Teen Prescription (Rx)**

**Drug Abuse Awareness School Tool Kit**
Teen Prescription (Rx) Drug Abuse Awareness School Tool Kit

About Smart Moves, Smart Choices

Smart Moves, Smart Choices is a national initiative to inform parents, teens, and educators about teen prescription (Rx) drug abuse and its serious risks and consequences. The initiative discourages teens from abusing prescription medications, motivates parents to monitor their medicine cabinets and initiate conversations with their teens, and inspires educators to teach students about the dangers of prescription drug abuse so teens are more likely to make smart decisions.

SmartMovesSmartChoices.org