

Message Platform on Rx Medication Abuse

What is the nature of the Rx abuse problem in our area?

- The abuse of prescription medications is a growing public health concern.
 - Every day, more than 2,500 teenagers abuse prescription medication for the first time¹.
 - Most teens obtain medications they take from friends and family.
- Many young people mistakenly think that it is safer to misuse prescription medications than illegal street drugs. There is less social stigma attached to misusing medications so it seems more acceptable to teens.
- Parents often are unaware that young people are abusing prescription and over-the-counter medications.
 - Even when they do know, they don't know how to talk to their children about the dangers.
- These medications have a legitimate medical use when used properly under the doctor's supervision, but misuse of these medications can lead to addiction, overdose and even death.
- Prescription drug abuse is still drug abuse.
- It is time for officials at the federal, state and local level to call attention to this problem and help parents and families curb the abuse of prescription medications.

What can parents do to prevent their children from abusing Rx medications?

- Parents should:
 - keep their medications in a secure location and know how much medication is in the prescription container.
 - encourage friends and relatives, especially grandparents, to also safeguard and regularly monitor the medications in their homes.

¹ Partnership for a Drug Free America/ ONDCP, "Teens and Prescription Drugs", Feb., 2007

- consult a pharmacist about how to properly dispose of medications that are no longer needed
- Visit www.safeguardmy meds.org for more information.

How does Rx medication abuse affect medical care?

- The illegal trafficking and abuse of prescription medications can interfere with the care of people suffering from serious illnesses and injuries by making it difficult for them to get the medications they need.
- We need to make sure that people who are under a doctor's care continue to get the treatment they deserve.