

To make your home and community safer:

- * Lock up any of your prescriptions that can be abused.
- * Take an inventory of the prescriptions in your home.
- * Regularly check that none of your medication is missing.
- * Set household rules on how to use prescription drugs properly.
- * Properly dispose of old or unused prescriptions.
- * Share your knowledge about youth prescription drug abuse with friends and family.
- * Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information about prescription drug abuse.
- * Participate in local events to learn more about Rx drug abuse in your community and how you can help.



Prescription drug abuse can become a problem for anyone, regardless of race, age, or wealth. Talk to your children about the dangers of abusing prescription drugs.

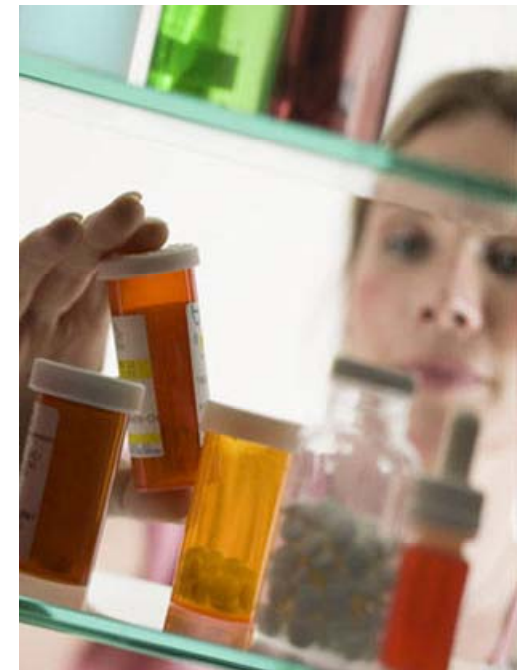


MADCAT (McMinn Anti-Drug Coalition Aiding Teens)

For more information about prescription drug abuse, and about how you can become part of the efforts in your community to prevent this problem, contact MADCAT (McMinn Anti-Drug Coalition Aiding Teens) at (423) 263-2303.

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Protect your abusable prescription drugs.



1 in 5 youth has tried to get high using prescription drugs. Often, the first place they look is the medicine cabinet.

Rx Drug Abuse

Prescription drugs are falsely believed by many to be “safer” than illegal drugs. The three types of prescription drugs most commonly abused are:

- * **Pain relievers**
- * **Stimulants**
- * **Sedatives/Tranquilizers**

Each type of prescription drug acts differently on the brain and has different side effects—but ALL can be *addictive, harmful, and deadly*. Prescription (Rx) drug abuse is a dangerous and growing problem among America’s youth. In 2003, 2.3 million youth had abused prescription drugs. By 2007, that number had nearly doubled to over 4.5 million. Today, there are more kids over the age of 12 who abuse prescription drugs than there are kids who abuse ecstasy, cocaine, crack, heroin, and methamphetamines combined.



Kids as young as 12 are using prescription drugs to get high and to “self-medicate.” It is believed that pharmaceuticals may act as youths’ “gateway” drug due to their easy home access and growing availability.

Why is youth prescription drug abuse a growing problem?

- * Prescription drugs are **readily available** to youth. Youth have easy access to family and friends’ **medicine cabinets** when they are in their homes.
- * Youth **believe there is little risk** in abusing prescription drugs. This means that even those **teens who would not try other illegal drugs** might be willing to try prescription drugs to get high.
- * Some youth “**self-medicate**” in an attempt to better handle and **control their daily stress**. Ways that teens self medicate include: taking sedatives to sleep after a busy day; stimulants to stay awake to study for tests or to boost energy to help them lose weight; and pain relievers to help them relax and escape from the social or academic pressures they feel.
- * The problem of youth Rx drug abuse has **grown faster** than the nation, as a whole, was prepared for. **Parents** are often unaware of youth prescription drug abuse because it was not a problem they had to deal with as teenagers and young adults. In addition, parents and other adults are unaware that the **major source** of youth prescription drug abuse is the home **medicine cabinet**.

Parents as Key Preventers

Due to the inadequacy of national prevention efforts addressing the problem of youth prescription drug abuse, **parents are the most valuable resource** in preventing youth from misusing Rx drugs. Still, many parents are unaware of the severity of Rx drug abuse.

Kids who learn about the real risks of drugs at home are up to 50 percent less likely to use drugs. And while **9 out of 10 parents** of teens say they have talked to their teen about the dangers of drugs, only **3 out of 10 teens** say they have learned about the dangers of drugs from their parents and even fewer have received messages at home about the danger of Rx drug abuse.

In reality, fewer than **1 in 4 parents** report discussing with their teen the risks of using prescription drugs to get high.

Make the message clear. Point out the facts that you’d like your child to know about the dangers of drugs, and make a special point to tell them the dangers of prescription drugs abuse.

