

DON'T BE A SPECTATOR.

PARENTS

can help prevent the misuse of prescription, illicit, and over-the-counter medications.

SAFE DECISIONS BEGIN WITH SIMPLE CONVERSATIONS.

1

TALK WITH YOUR DOCTOR. Advocate for your adolescent(s) by having open conversations with their doctor. Share all personal and family medical history in order to create the safest treatment plan for them. Encourage your adolescent(s) to ask questions and advocate for their health and well-being.

2

SPEAK TO YOUR PHARMACIST. Listen to your pharmacist and ensure that all instructions match your doctor's directions. Read all printed information that is provided and ask questions about your prescription or over-the-counter medication.

3

INFORM YOUR ADOLESCENT(S). Lead adolescents to make safe decisions, including the decision to not misuse or divert substances. Discuss consequences of prescription, illicit, and over-the-counter medication misuse. In addition, help them understand what they can achieve by making safe and smart decisions.

4

INVOLVE YOUR COMMUNITY. By educating your community and increasing your knowledge of prescription, illicit, and over-the-counter medications, you can help create a safe environment for your adolescent(s).

LEARN THE FACTS. Educate yourself about the substances your adolescent(s) and community may have access to. Know common types of prescription, illicit, and over-the-counter drugs that might be prescribed to or used by your adolescent(s) if they are injured or experience pain.

START THE CONVERSATION. Initiate conversations about the safe use of prescription, illicit, and over-the-counter drugs. Encourage adolescents to talk with you, doctors, healthcare professionals, and other trusted adults if they are prescribed medications, are injured, or experience pain. Inspire adolescents to be aware of their mental health and stress levels and how that can affect their decision making.

KNOW THE SIGNS. As a parent, your first line of defense is recognizing risky decisions or behaviors from your adolescent(s). Regularly support your adolescent(s) by encouraging open conversations, sharing resources, and being aware of how they are handling every day life.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO START THE CONVERSATION.

Teens need their parents to start talking about prescription, illicit, and over-the-counter substances, particularly opioid pain relievers. Parents can help adolescents make safe chemical health decisions by speaking up and encouraging them to be their own best advocate.

3.2%

Took from a friend or relative without asking

9.5%

Bought from a friend or relative

38.6%

Obtained from a friend or relative for free

SOURCES OF PAIN RELIEVER ACCESS

for most recent misuse (of those aged 12 and older)

WHAT IF YOUR ADOLESCENT IS PRESCRIBED OPIOIDS OR OTHER MEDICATIONS?

Talk openly with the doctor or healthcare provider and explore alternatives to opioids. Share information about other medications that are being taken and don't hesitate to ask questions. If you or your adolescent are prescribed opioids, support them and their pain management, follow the guidelines to reduce use as soon as possible, and continue to follow guidelines for safe use, storage, and disposal.

Be certain that you are always holding onto the original prescription bottle with instructions for use. Administer the dose and lock the medication between doses. See below for more tips on the safe use, storage, and disposal of prescription and over-the-counter medications:



SAFE USE

1. **Talk.** Speak up and ask doctors and healthcare professionals questions.
2. **Know.** Learn about prescription, illicit, and over-the-counter drugs.
3. **Read.** If prescribed, examine labels and follow directions.
4. **Avoid.** Be aware of interactions between drugs.
5. **Monitor.** Observe reactions to a medication if prescribed, and stay in contact with your doctor.



SAFE STORAGE

1. Store your prescription and over-the-counter medications in a safe location out of sight away from other family members, friends, visitors, and pets.
2. Install a locking mechanism on your cabinet. Other options include prescription lock boxes and household safes.
3. Monitor and count the amount of prescription and over-the-counter drugs that remain each time a dose is taken.



SAFE DISPOSAL

1. Follow DEA guidelines for the safe disposal of your medications.
2. Look for a free prescription take-back location near you. Many police stations and pharmacies offer ways to safely and anonymously dispose of unused, unwanted, or leftover medications.
3. Participate in prescription take-back events and community drug take back days that occur several times each year (DEA.gov).



SCAN FOR MORE PARENT RESOURCES

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