

Not Worth The Risk
X even if it's legal

Presenter's Guide

**Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer:
*What You Can Do To Help Prevent Teen
Prescription Drug Abuse***

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So, Who is a Teen Influencer?

Anyone who interacts with teens on a regular basis, and can have a positive influence. Among others, this includes:

- Parents
- Grandparents, aunts, uncles and other family members
- Teachers
- Coaches
- School administrators
- Guidance counselors and school psychologists
- School nurses
- School resource officers
- Community-based healthcare professionals
- After school program facilitators
- Youth pastors


What's in this Guide?

This **Presenter's Guide** includes everything you'll need to plan a one-hour presentation for a group of teen influencers in your community. It will walk you through the steps needed to plan and promote a workshop in your community, school, clinic or other setting.

In addition to this guide, the *Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer* program includes:

- A **PowerPoint presentation** complete with a script and suggested talking points
- **Presenter's checklist** with an organized list of tasks to do before, the day of and after your workshop
- **Role play scenarios** include real-life situations to engage parents, teachers, coaches, healthcare providers and other teen influencers and make the workshop more interactive
- **Key messages** provide teen influencers with a snapshot of important information about teen prescription drug abuse
- **Printable PDF handouts** for attendees including:
 - *A Troubling Trend: Why Teens Turn to Prescription Drugs*
 - *Warning Signs and Symptoms of Prescription Drug Abuse*
 - *Myth Busters: 6 Myths about Teens and Prescription Drug Abuse*
 - *You Can Make a Difference* (a series of handouts tailored to different teen influencer groups; each includes practical tips and strategies that parents, educators, healthcare providers and others can use to help prevent prescription drug abuse among teens at home, school, on the field, in the clinic or at the local pharmacy)

NOTE: Most of these materials appear at the back of this guide for easy reference so you can easily photocopy and distribute to others. You can download all of the materials—including the PowerPoint and suggested talking points and brochures—by visiting www.talkaboutrx.org. Make sure to review the materials before getting started. Check back with www.talkaboutrx.org for new tools too.

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- *Brochures* for parents, educators and healthcare providers
 - **Sample commitment card** to give participants the opportunity to commit to do something to help address the problem in some way following the workshop
 - **Sample promotional materials**
 - Language for email invitation
 - Flyer for posting at various sites in your workplace and community
 - **Evaluation forms**
 - Participant Evaluation Form – for attendees to complete at the end of the workshop
 - Presenter Evaluation Form – for you to complete after presenting each workshop

Prescription Drug Abuse & Teens

Before getting into the “How tos” for conducting the workshop, the next two pages provide a quick overview of the problem. The PowerPoint, speaker talking points and handouts include much more detail, including key messages, why teens are turning to prescription drugs, six common myths and important red flags that a teen might have a problem.

While the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs is declining overall, a new threat is emerging; **more teens are abusing prescription drugs than any illicit drug, except marijuana.**

Consider these facts:

- 1 in 5 teens (or 4.5 million) has abused prescription drugs.
- 1 in 3 teens report knowing someone who abuses prescription drugs.
- 1 in 3 teens surveyed says there is “nothing wrong” when using prescription drugs “every once and a while.”
- Every day, almost 2,500 teens abuse a prescription drug for the first time.
- Prescription drugs are abused more than cocaine, heroin, ecstasy and methamphetamine combined.

The abuse of prescription drugs may be **as close as the nearest medicine cabinet**. The majority of teens (8 out of 10) get prescription drugs from friends or relatives by stealing, buying or simply asking for them. Less often they will get them from strangers, including drug dealers, or by purchasing them online through pro-drug or illegal Internet pharmacies.

Many teens incorrectly believe that prescription drugs offer a safer way to get high, cope with stress or perform better at school or on the field. After all, they’ve seen their moms, dads, grandparents and other family members taking these medications to treat various illnesses, so what’s the harm? What teens don’t understand is that when these drugs are misused or taken without a doctor’s prescription, they are just as harmful as illegal street drugs. And teens who abuse prescription drugs may mix multiple medications without being aware of the dangerous—and potentially deadly—consequences. Just imagine what taking a handful of uppers, downers and painkillers at the same time can do to your body and brain?



The reality is bad things can happen when teens abuse these medications.

- Increases in blood pressure or heart rate
- Organ damage
- Addiction
- Difficulty breathing
- Seizures
- Death

Why Teens are Turning to Prescription Drugs

Adolescence is no picnic. Teenagers find themselves on a road to self discovery, constantly comparing themselves to their peers and pushing the limits of their new-found independence. They want to fit in and be well-liked, while also balancing other personal goals and pressures like getting into a good college. It's also a period of rapid physical and emotional development, not to mention changing body image and surges of hormones. And because the teen brain is not yet fully developed and they lack crucial life experiences, their judgment and ability to make sound decisions is not as good as they (or you) might think.

Taken together, it's no wonder many teens engage in a variety of risk-taking behaviors. *Any* teen is susceptible to misusing drugs, even the most reliable.

Unlike other forms of adolescent drug use, the desire to feel good or get high ranks much lower as a motivation for prescription drug misuse. More often, teens are turning to prescription drugs to help manage their daily lives—for example, to lower stress and anxiety, boost their mood, stay up all night studying for an exam or increase their performance. According to the 2007 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study, dealing with pressures and managing school-related stress is the number one reason why teens use prescription drugs.

Understanding what might motivate teens to abuse prescription drugs can help parents, teachers, coaches and others ask the right questions and intervene early.

About the Workshop

Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer: What You Can Do to Help Prevent Teen Prescription Drug Abuse is designed to educate teen influencers about the growing teen prescription drug abuse problem. It will also help build the confidence and skills teen influencers need to effectively address the issue with teens and within their communities, schools or health practices.

Purpose

This workshop and accompanying materials aim to:

- **Educate teen influencers** about teen prescription drug abuse—the extent of the problem, what motivates teens to misuse or abuse prescription drugs, how they gain access to these drugs, warning signs and symptoms of abuse.
- **Dispel popular myths** about prescription drug use and abuse.
- **Reinforce the powerful role that teen influencers can play** in educating teens about the dangers of prescription drug abuse and helping to promote healthy alternatives.
- **Provide tips for talking with teens** and identifying teachable moments.
- **Inspire participants to take action** against prescription drug abuse, whether it's talking about it with teens they interact with, implementing efforts within their own schools or practices, engaging other teen influencers or offering to give this presentation to others.

Structure

The workshop takes about one hour, allowing time for a role play exercise, a brief group discussion and questions and answers. The following outline will help you stay on track.

- Welcome and Introductions (10 minutes)
- Presentation (25-30 minutes)
- Role Playing Activity (15 minutes)
- Reconvene, Wrap Up and Evaluation (10 minutes)

See page 16 under *The Day of: Conducting Your Workshop* for a detailed explanation of the above. If needed, the workshop can be shorter or longer by cutting down or expanding on the material. Gauge your audience and decide how to best deliver the main points of the presentation in the time allotted.

Who Should Attend?

While anyone can attend the workshop, it should be geared toward teen influencers in your community: parents, teachers, guidance counselors, coaches, school or community-based healthcare providers or other influential community members who frequently interact with teens and may have the opportunity

to help shape their choices. It can be delivered to audiences of various sizes; however, you may find keeping the number of attendees low (under 25 people) will help facilitate discussion and learning.

Encourage Attendees to Take Action and Spread the Message Beyond Your Event

*For more information about how educators, parents and healthcare professionals can make a difference, refer to and remind attendees about the *You Can Make a Difference* handouts. These handouts provide suggestions for talking to teens, as well as targeted strategies to allow them to play a more ongoing role in helping to prevent prescription drug abuse.*

You can either tailor your workshop to a specific group like parents, teachers or coaches, or you may want to invite a diverse group of teen influencers to attend. The latter will allow attendees to hear different perspectives from people who interact with teens across a variety of settings.

Why Teen Influencers—Parents, Teachers, Coaches and Healthcare Professionals—Matter!

- Teen influencers are among the most meaningful people in an adolescent's life. They are natural, credible mentors who can have frequent and open discussions with teens about the risks of prescription drug abuse and take steps to help teens make positive, healthy choices. It's important to let kids know that abusing these drugs is not the norm—for every one teen who is abusing them, another four are not.
- Identifying and engaging other teen influencers in your community is a key to effectively preventing prescription drug abuse.
- Research shows that teens with strong bonds at home and at school are less likely to abuse prescription drugs. The more teen influencers who are prepared to spread the message, the more teens will be reached with important messages about the dangers of abusing prescription drugs.
- Even small steps—like a brief conversation over dinner or in the locker room, or making sure your prescription medications are kept in a secure location—can make a big difference in deterring drug abuse.

How to Plan & Prepare

This section gives you all the information you need to plan and prepare for a successful workshop. For quick and easy planning, see the Presenter's Checklist on page 25.

Before the Presentation

Decide who to invite. Think about the people in your community who interact with or work with teens and might benefit from this workshop. Create a list and start making calls to community leaders and organizations that can help promote the event. To make it easier on you, consider giving the presentation at an upcoming community or professional meeting that already has a captive audience of teen influencers, such as a PTA meeting or other regular or annual conferences of teachers, coaches, healthcare providers.

Choose a convenient time and place. You can give this workshop in a wide variety of settings. Plan to hold your workshop at a time that's likely to be most convenient for your attendees. Depending on the group, this may be during a lunch hour, on a weeknight or weekend.

Select a location that is convenient, easy to find and will not charge a fee for using the space (for example, your local library, high school, community or senior center, place of worship). Again, you might choose to present it during a regularly scheduled meeting. Make sure the room is large enough to comfortably seat all attendees, and ask whether it is equipped with a computer (make sure it has PowerPoint) and an LCD projector or if you will need to bring your own. Consider visiting the meeting location in advance so you are comfortable with the setting. This will help you plan your presentation.

Tip: Remember, this doesn't have to be formal. Just having a few neighbors or friends over for coffee to run through the presentation will help educate others about the problem.

Getting people to attend. Start promoting your presentation at least three to four weeks ahead of time. To help get the word out:

- Send an email invitation to potential participants to let them know about your upcoming presentation. A sample email invitation can be found at the back of this guide.
- Find out if the local school and community groups, such as the PTA or YMCA/YWCA, have email list serves to help send out your invitation.
- Contact your local newspaper or community calendar about listing your workshop as an upcoming event. Your local radio or TV station may be willing to air a public service announcement about the problem and provide information about the event.
- Create posters and/or flyers (a template flyer is included for download at www.talkaboutrx.org) to post/hand out at local venues including the library, teachers' lounge, YMCA/YWCA, school break room, sporting venues, places of worship or retail outlets. Double check that the event details are correct and always ask for permission before hanging posters or distributing flyers.
- Word of mouth. Talk with people in your community—at work, the grocery store, the gym—about your upcoming workshop. Ask them to pass the information along to any teen influencers they know.

What you'll need. Make sure to bring or arrange for the following equipment and materials to help your workshop run smoothly.

- **Computer and LCD projector** for PowerPoint presentation
- **Printed copy of the slides** (Make sure to print the slides with notes pages—you'll see this option under "print preview"—and review the suggested script)

Why should I hold this workshop?

Prescription drug abuse is a growing problem among youth in America. This workshop will help raise awareness about the dangers of teen prescription drug abuse, equip teen influencers with useful information and resources and inspire action within your community to help prevent the abuse of these medications.

Who should attend?

Teen influencers—parents, teachers, coaches, school or community-based healthcare providers, or any other trusted community leader who frequently interacts with teens and can make a difference.

What's the ideal size?

It can be delivered to audiences of various sizes; however, you may find keeping the number of attendees low (under 25 people) will help facilitate discussion and learning.

How can I encourage people to attend?

Talk with people in your community and spread the word by posting flyers, sending emails and using your local news media.


- **Memory stick/CD** with the presentation slides (the presentation is also available on NCPIC's web site at www.talkaboutrx.org, but it's always a good idea to bring a back up, just in case!)
- **Photocopies of handouts.** If you plan to give the workshop more than a few times, you may want to create packets for attendees ahead of time to include copies of the handouts and distribute them after your presentation.
- **List of registered attendees**, sign-in sheet, extra paper and pens
- Flip chart, markers, and blank index cards for participant questions (optional)
- Name tags and markers (optional)
- Refreshments (optional)

Educate yourself. Get to know the issue inside and out. Study the materials in this guide, including the PowerPoint slides and accompanying. Make sure to print the slides “with notes pages” so you can read through the script and highlight important points you would like to make during your talk.

Check out recommended resources, as well as other handouts (copies are provided at the back of this guide and are also available for download at NCPIC's web site, www.talkaboutrx.org). Talk with experts, and discuss the issue with friends and colleagues to help you better anticipate participant questions and perspectives.

Know your audience. Think about the people you've invited and tailor your presentation to meet their needs. For example, if you're talking to a group of healthcare providers you might give more information about how they can play a role in various healthcare settings. If it's mostly parents, select role play scenarios that will be most relevant to them.

Practice. Rehearse your presentation at least once so that you are comfortable with it and get your timing down. If possible, practice out loud in front of someone who can give you feedback and help you get used to having an audience. Remember, the workshop is supposed to be informal and interactive, so don't get nervous. Think about the positive contribution you are



making by educating other teen influencers, getting them to take notice of the dangers of prescription drug abuse and equipping them to act in their own community.

Be prepared for some hard questions and misperceptions. Don't worry if you don't have all the answers! Let your audience know upfront that you are not a healthcare professional (if that's the case) and that while you might not know the answer to every question, you can point them to existing resources or follow up with them after the workshop. If you get stuck, simply say "I'm not sure, but I can check and get back to you." You can also refer them to the NCPIE web site at www.talkaboutrx.org.

Send a reminder email. Send an email to all registered attendees 2 to 3 days before the workshop to remind them about the date, time and location.

Conducting the Workshop (The Day Of)

Getting Ready

On the day of your talk, arrive early to make sure the computer, projector and any other equipment are working properly. Get comfortable with the meeting space and give yourself enough time to do a quick run through of your presentation. If you have a colleague or friend who is willing, ask if he or she would be willing to help facilitate and/or take notes and share feedback after the workshop.

Set up a participant “check-in” area where attendees can sign in and get a name tag. You might want to wait until the end of the workshop to give out handouts to avoid unnecessary distractions or disruptions at the start of your talk. If you have a very large audience or limited budget you might suggest that participants download and print the handouts and resources on their own.


If a flip chart or white board is available, write down the workshop objectives and any ground rules you would suggest for the meeting (for example, maintaining confidentiality if personal information/stories are shared, being respectful of others, listening and not interrupting). Have another sheet readily available to use as a "parking lot" for participant questions that may require follow up. If you would like, you can also have blank index cards on hand. This will give attendees the option to write down any questions they have during the presentation along with their contact information so that you can follow up if needed.

As participants arrive, encourage them to sign in and be seated so that you can begin your presentation on time.

Giving the Presentation

Setting the stage (10 minutes)

Begin the workshop by introducing yourself and letting participants know what they can expect during the next hour. Make sure you mention the participant evaluation form at the beginning, so



they don't leave without completing it. Spend a few minutes setting ground rules together so that you are all on the same page.

The PowerPoint Presentation (25-30 minutes)

To deliver the presentation, just click through the PowerPoint slides and refer to your printed notes pages as needed.

The PowerPoint presentation starts by defining teen prescription drug abuse and the extent of the problem. It also covers the following:

- Why teens are using prescription drugs
- How teens get these drugs in the first place
- Commonly abused drugs
- What to look for – the warning signs that a teen might be abusing prescription drugs
- How to talk to teens and other teen influencers about prescription drug abuse
- Taking action to lower the risk of prescription drug abuse
- Resources to help teen influencers learn more

From time to time, the speaker notes will prompt you to poll the audience or ask them a question. When you reach Slide 28 about role playing, walk the participants through the interactive exercise described below. You will come back to the slides during the Wrap-Up.

Role Playing Exercise (15 minutes)

Ask participants to break out into groups of 2, 3 or 4. Have group members take turns playing the role of a teen influencer talking to a teen (Role Playing Scenarios are included in the back of this guide). This exercise, which is based on real-life scenarios, will help attendees put what they are learning about prescription drug abuse into practice. Encourage them to come up with a variety of strategies and responses to use when talking with teens.

Tip: Remember to keep an eye on your time. Many of your participants may be on a tight schedule. To make sure you get through all the important points, bring a stop watch or timer that you can glance at during your presentation. Have some flexibility for discussion, but try to keep things on track as much as possible.

Sharing and Evaluation (10 minutes)

At the end of the role playing exercise, reconvene the group and return to PowerPoint to discuss lessons learned and share strategies for carrying the message into the larger community.

- Spend a few minutes discussing thoughts from the Role Playing Exercise, answering questions and identifying next steps for participants.
- Encourage participants to make a commitment to action (See the sample Commitment Card at the back of this guide).
- Review the list of handouts with the group, including the list of other helpful resources. Remind them that many national organizations and federal agencies are working to deter prescription drug abuse and have developed many useful resources and programs.
- Collect index cards with questions, if you passed them out.
- Leave time for participants to complete their evaluation forms.
- Thank your audience for their time.

After Your Workshop

Review participant evaluations and give us feedback about your presentation so we can better serve you and other teen influencers who want to make a difference.

- Collect all evaluation forms.
- Review the participant evaluation forms and question index cards. You can use this information to improve your future presentations.
- Follow up with attendees to reply to unanswered questions.

Complete and send the presenter's evaluation to: NCPIE, 200-A Monroe Street, Suite 212 Rockville, MD 20850 or fax to: (301) 340-3944.

Helpful Resources and Tools

The following represents a short list of national organizations and federal agencies that offer information and resources on preventing prescription drug abuse. These organizations and the tools they offer can support your efforts to develop an education and prevention campaign to help combat teen prescription drug abuse in your community.

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

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) is a non-profit organization that works to strengthen the capacity of community-based anti-drug coalitions' in their effort to create and maintain safe, healthy and drug-free communities. CADCA supports its member coalitions with training and technical assistance, public policy advocacy, media strategies and marketing programs, conferences and special events. Working in collaboration with the Office of National Drug Control Policy's (www.ondcp.gov) National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, CADCA developed [Strategizer 52 "Teen Prescription Drug Abuse: An Emerging Threat"](#), which provides facts on prescription drug abuse or misuse among youth, strategies that teen influencers can use to address this issue in their communities, and best practices from coalitions across the country. In partnership with the Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA), CADCA created a "Dose of Prevention" toolkit to help communities better address cough medicine abuse.

Consumer Healthcare Products Association (www.chpa-info.org)

The Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA) is the not-for-profit association representing the makers of over-the-counter (OTC) medicines and nutritional supplements. CHPA has been engaged in raising awareness about teen medicine abuse for seven years, working in partnership with the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, D.A.R.E. America, and others. Initiatives have included public service announcements; a "Dose of Prevention" toolkit to engage community members and local media in the prevention of cough medicine abuse; English- and Spanish-language brochures; lesson plans for school children; grassroots, word-of-mouth campaigns to encourage parent-to-parent information sharing; outreach to pediatricians; an educational collaboration with WebMD; and the introduction of a new educational icon being placed on all OTC cough medicines containing the active ingredient dextromethorphan. The one-stop resource for more information is www.StopMedicineAbuse.org.

D.A.R.E. America (www.dare.com)

Responding to the growth of prescription drug abuse, D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) America has developed curricula to curtail the abuse of prescription and over-the-counter medicines by teens and young adults. Students, parents, educators and community leaders are directly addressed through videos and lesson plans designed to reinforce the [core D.A.R.E. curriculum](#).

National Council on Patient Information and Education (www.talkaboutrx.org)

The National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPIE) is a nonprofit coalition of diverse consumer, government, patient advocacy and public health organizations. NCPIE is the nation's leading authority for informing the general public and healthcare professionals on safe medicine use through better communication. Better medicine communication can lead to better health outcomes and improved quality of life.

Working with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and a project advisory team made up of leading drug prevention, child advocacy and other leading professional organizations, NCPIE developed the “Maximizing Your Role as an Influencer: Talking to Teens About Prescription Drug Abuse” program to educate teen influencers—parents, grandparents, teachers, coaches, community and school-based healthcare professionals and others—about the dangers of prescription drug abuse and inspire them to take action to help combat the problem in their communities or professional settings. NCPIE also developed BeMedWise (www.bemedwise.org), a public education initiative to promote a better understanding that over-the-counter (OTC) drug products are serious medicines and must be taken with care.

National Institute on Drug Abuse (www.nida.nih.gov)

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), part of the National Institutes of Health, is specifically focused on conducting and supporting research to gain a better understanding of drug abuse and addiction. NIDA offers a wealth of information, including “[Preventing Drug Abuse among Children and Adolescents](#),” a research-based guide for parents, educators, and community leaders. NIDA also recently introduced [NIDAMED](#), a comprehensive Physicians' Outreach Initiative that gives medical professionals tools and resources to screen their patients for tobacco, alcohol, illicit, and nonmedical prescription drug use. The NIDAMED resources include an online screening tool, a companion quick reference guide, and a comprehensive resource guide for clinicians.

Office of National Drug Control Policy (www.ondcp.gov)

The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) establishes policies, priorities, and objectives for the nation's drug control program to reduce drug abuse and trafficking, drug-related crime and violence, and drug-related health consequences. ONDCP's [National Drug Control Strategy](#) directs the federal government's anti-drug abuse efforts and establishes a program and guidelines for cooperation among Federal, State, and local organizations. ONDCP's [National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign](#) is an integrated communications effort that combines advertising with public communications outreach to deliver anti-drug messages to America's youth, their parents, and other influential adults. Through the campaign, ONDCP offers a number of informational web sites for teens (www.abovetheinfluence.org), parents (www.theanti-drug.org) to address different types of drug abuse, including misuse of prescription medications.



Partnership for a Drug-Free America (www.drugfree.org)

The Partnership is a nonprofit organization that unites parents, scientists and communications professionals to help families raise healthy children. The Partnership offers interactive tools that translate the latest science and research on teen behavior, addiction and treatment into easy to understand resources. The Partnership's [Parents Resource Center](#) provides information and tools to help parents better understand teen drug abuse and how to talk to their children. The Partnership developed [Not in My House](#) as an online resource for parents to learn about how to address prescription drug abuse with their children. The Partnership's [Time to Talk](#) program offers easy-to-use guides and tips to help parents and adults have ongoing conversations with kids to keep them healthy and drug-free. The Partnership launched [Time to Act](#), an online resource for parents who suspect or know their teen is drinking or using drugs.

Students Against Destructive Decisions, Inc. (www.sadd.org)

Students Against Destructive Decisions Inc. (SADD) is a peer-to-peer education, prevention, and activism organization dedicated to preventing destructive decisions, particularly underage drinking, other drug use, risky and impaired driving, teen violence, and teen suicide.

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (www.samhsa.gov)
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (www.csat.samhsa.gov)**

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA), part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), focuses attention, programs and funding on promoting a life in the community with jobs, homes and meaningful relationships with family and friends for people with or at risk for mental or substance use disorders. SAMSHA also offers a toll-free national helpline (800-662-HELP (800-662-4357) and the [Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator](#).

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (www.samhsa.gov)**

CSAP works with States and communities to develop comprehensive prevention systems that create healthy communities in which people enjoy a quality life. This includes supportive work and school environments, drug- and crime-free neighborhoods, and positive connections with friends and family.

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Appendix A. Materials for Presenters

- Presenter's Checklist
- Role Playing Scenarios
- Promotional Materials
 - Sample email invitation
 - Sample flyer
- Presenter Evaluation Form

Presenter's Checklist

Before the Workshop

- Identify a convenient location that has space available for no charge (for example local school, library, church); ask whether the venue has a computer and projector for your use or if you'll have to bring your own
- Go visit the site ahead of time
- Set a date and time
- Send email invitations with deadline to RSVP (sample language for the invitation is included in the guide)
- Create and distribute any promotional materials (posters, flyers, listserv messages)
- Track participant registration and create an attendee list to be used as a check-in sheet
- Review the workshop materials and additional resources so that you are prepared
- Anticipate your audience and customize your presentation accordingly (for example, if it's mostly parents, use role play scenarios that are more relevant for them)
- Practice your presentation (Print the slides with notes pages—you'll see this option under "print preview"—and review the suggested script)
- Photocopy all materials and consider creating packets for participants
- Confirm the event location (2-3 days before)
- Send email reminder to attendees (2-3 days before)

Day of the Workshop

What you'll need to bring:*

- Printed version of slides with speaker notes
- Laptop computer (equipped with Power Point software)
- Projector
- Photocopies of select handouts (See pages 5 and 6 for complete list)

- Flip chart, markers, index cards for questions*
- Name tags*
- Sign-in sheet with email addresses
- Paper and pens
- Memory stick/CD with the PowerPoint presentation. Remember to bring a back up!

*Optional

- Arrive early to prepare the room (rearrange chairs and tables, if needed)
- Test the computer and projector to make sure they are working
 - Run through the PowerPoint slides
- Set up check-in table with
 - Participant sign-in sheet
 - Name tags and markers
- Review PowerPoint presentation and speaker notes
- Distribute and review handouts and evaluation forms at the end of the workshop
- Collect participant evaluation forms

After the Workshop

- Follow up on any unanswered participant questions
- Review evaluation forms
- Complete the presenter evaluation and submit to: NCPIE, 200-A Monroe Street, Suite 212, Rockville, MD 20850 or fax to: (301) 340-3944.
- Send a thank you note to the facility that hosted the workshop

Role Playing Scenarios

Based on your anticipated audience and number of attendees, you will want to select from the following scenarios to make your workshop more engaging and interactive. This activity will help give attendees a chance to translate what they are learning into practice by exploring how they would respond to different situations. It gives them the opportunity to develop effective strategies to educate teens about the dangers of abusing prescription drugs, dispel myths and help move teens toward positive decision-making and healthy behaviors.



Pediatrician/family doctor. Your 15-year-old patient asks you about getting a prescription for a stimulant that can help him perform better in school. He says that he's tried his brother's ADHD medication a few times and that it really made a difference in how much he was able to get done. Based on your history with this patient, you know that he does not have ADHD or any other condition that makes this drug medically necessary.



Parent. Your teen comes home after school and doesn't know you're there. You overhear him talking casually with his friends about prescription drugs.



Parent. You notice on your Internet site history that someone has visited several web sites that advertise easy access to prescription medications like pain relievers. Neither you nor your partner has researched this information. Your kids have access to the family computer after school.




Parent/grandparent. You have a chronic pain condition, and you've been keeping your prescription pain medication in your home medicine cabinet for several years. Recently, you've noticed that some pills have been disappearing from the bottle. You have two teenagers living in your home.




Parent/other adult. You are watching a popular movie or TV show with your teen. Some of the characters are joking about celebrities who abuse prescription drugs (for example, Rush Limbaugh, Michael Jackson, Heath Ledger, Elvis or Anna Nicole Smith).







Parent/teacher. Your child or student makes a comment that a prescription drug that was just advertised on television sounds “really cool.”




Parent/teacher. It’s nearing the end of the term. Your child/student is very anxious about upcoming final exams and papers, not to mention other school and family pressures. You recall that she recently mentioned one of her close friends sometimes takes a medication to help stay awake and concentrate.




Teacher/school counselor. A student who typically performs well at school seems to be having concentration problems and low energy. You overhear her in the restroom telling a friend she’s been taking some of her mom’s pills to help her relax. When her friend tells her that’s not a good idea, she responds by saying that “it came from a doctor, so it’s totally safe.”




Coach. You’re aware that one of your star athletes has been trying to lose a little weight. You notice that he has a prescription (in his name) for a medication that commonly causes weight loss. He is losing more weight than necessary and seems uncharacteristically moody and irritable. You overhear from his friends that he is taking the medication more than once or twice a day. Some of his teammates are concerned about him, while others have expressed interest in getting similar help to lose or gain weight.



Coach. On the bus ride home from your latest match you hear several players talking about a raging party this weekend. It’s expected that many of the partygoers will be bringing whatever prescription medications they can find at home or from the medicine cabinets of older relatives or their friends’ parents.



Any. A group of teens at a local high school get caught selling prescription drugs to kids in the community. You mention it to your child/student and they respond by saying, “I don’t see what the big deal is. They’re legal...it’s not like you can’t just buy them at the pharmacy.”



Any. You notice that your usually even-keeled child/student has become hyperactive, lethargic or exhibits other significant behavioral changes.



Sample E-Mail Invitation

[SUGGESTED SUBJECT LINE]

You Can Help Prevent Prescription Drug Abuse

[SAMPLE E-MAIL MESSAGE]

Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer: What You Can Do to Help Prevent Teen Prescription Drug Abuse

Please join us for a free one-hour workshop about teens and prescription drug abuse on [DATE] at [LOCATION].

Did you know? More teens are now abusing prescription drugs than any illicit drug, except marijuana. It's a growing problem that's putting young lives at risk.

Just one hour can make a difference. Get the facts about teen prescription drug abuse. Learn how to communicate with the teens in your life about the dangers of prescription drug abuse to help them make healthy choices.

Who should attend? Everyone has a role to play, whether you are a teacher, parent, coach, guidance counselor, healthcare provider or community leader.

RSVP by replying to this e-mail, or call [PHONE NUMBER].

We look forward to seeing you.

For more information and updated resources, visit the National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPIE) at www.talkaboutrx.org. *Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer* is made possible, in part, by funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and Purdue Pharma L.P.

YOU'RE INVITED to a *free* workshop to help prevent teen prescription drug abuse in your community...

Did you know 1 in 5 teens has abused a prescription drug?

Have you heard of “bowling” or “pharming” parties?

More teens are turning to prescription drugs than any illicit drugs, except marijuana.

Every day, 2,500 teenagers use a prescription drug to get high or help cope with stress for the first time.

WHAT: Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer: *What You Can Do to Help Prevent Teen Prescription Drug Abuse*

WHEN: _____ from _____

WHERE: _____

RSVP by: _____ to _____

- ✓ **LEARN** about teen prescription drug abuse and the real dangers to teens.
- ✓ **DISCOVER** how you can play a role in helping teens understand and avoid the risks.
- ✓ **SHARE** what you learn with other teen influencers—parents, teachers, coaches, school and community-based health care providers—to help raise awareness about the prescription drug abuse problem and mobilize parents, schools and communities to take action.

Presenter's Evaluation Form

*Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer:
What You Can Do to Help Prevent Teen Prescription Drug Abuse*

Thank you for leading today's workshop and helping to spread the word and prevent prescription drug abuse among teens. Please take a moment to answer the questions below. This evaluation will be used to improve this workshop and advise us in creating additional tools to help empower teen influencers to effectively educate and engage the community about prescription drug abuse. Your feedback will help ensure that this program continues to make a difference.

Please rate the workshop in terms of:					
	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Your overall opinion of workshop?					
Your overall opinion of the workshop materials (handouts, suggested speaker's notes)?					
Ease of giving the workshop to the group?					
Usefulness of presenter's guide?					
In your opinion, how well did participants understand teen prescription drug abuse problem after attending?					
In your opinion, what was participants' general receptiveness to program?					

ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK

Which materials were most helpful/valuable?

Did the presenter's guide give you enough information to prepare you? If not, what should we change/add?

Based on your experience leading the workshop is there any missing information? If so, what?

Is there something that we could include to make this workshop more effective or interesting?

How did you learn about giving this workshop? (Please circle all that apply)

Newspaper Flyer E-mail Friend/Colleague

Professional Organization School

Other _____

Which best describes you? (Please circle one)

Parent Teacher Coach

Clinician (pediatrician, school nurse, counselor, social worker)

Other teen influencer (please describe) _____

Would you recommend this training to other friends or colleagues? _____ Yes _____ No

If you would like to provide additional comments, please do so below.

Please send this form to: NCPIE, NCPIE, 200-A Monroe Street, Suite 212, Rockville, MD 20850 or fax to: (301) 340-3944. Thank you for your feedback.



Appendix B. Teen Influencers Materials

- Key message points for influencers
- A Troubling Trend: Why Teens Turn to Prescription Drugs
- Warning Signs of Prescription Drug Abuse
- Myth Busters: 6 Myths about Teens and Prescription Drug Abuse
- You Can Make a Difference – handouts for educators, parents and healthcare providers with practical tips and strategies to help prevent prescription drug abuse among teens
- Commitment Card
- Participant Evaluation Form

Additional materials, including brochures for parents, educators and healthcare providers are available at www.talkaboutrx.org.

Teen Prescription Drug Abuse: Key Points for Teen Influencers

- **The latest drug of choice.** While the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs is declining overall, a new threat is emerging; more teens are abusing prescription drugs than any illicit drug, except marijuana. The misuse and abuse of prescription medications—the very same drugs used to legitimately relieve pain, and treat conditions like anxiety, depression, sleep disorders, or ADHD in some people—is a growing and under-recognized problem that puts young lives at risk.
 - 1 in 5 teens (or 4.5 million) has deliberately abused these drugs.
 - 1 in 3 teens surveyed says there is “nothing wrong” when using prescription drugs “every once and a while.”
 - Every day, 2,500 youth (12-17) abuse a prescription pain reliever for the very first time.
- **Prescription drugs are readily available and free.** It’s easy for teens to get their hands on prescription drugs. The abuse of prescription drugs can start at the nearest medicine cabinet. The majority of teens get prescription drugs from friends or relatives by stealing, buying or simply asking for them. Some teens also get these drugs from strangers, including drug dealers, or by purchasing them online through pro-drug or rogue Internet pharmacies.
- **The most commonly used prescription drugs are:**
 - *Opioid analgesics* (for example, Vicodin, OxyContin, Percocet, methadone) that are used to relieve pain; they work by blocking pain messages from reaching the brain;
 - *Stimulants* (for example, Ritalin, Concerta, Adderall) that are used to treat narcolepsy, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and other conditions; these drugs speed up brain activity causing increased alertness, attention, and energy that come with elevated blood pressure, increased heart rate and breathing; and
 - *Sedatives/tranquilizers* (for example, Valium, Xanax, Ativan, Klonopin, Ambien) that are used to treat anxiety, tension, panic attacks, and sleep disorders; these medications slow down or “depress” the functions of the brain and central nervous system.
- **It’s not just about getting high.** Unlike other forms of adolescent drug use, the desire to feel good or get high ranks much lower as a motivation for prescription drug misuse. More often, teens are turning to prescription drugs to help manage their daily lives—for example, to lower stress and anxiety, boost their mood or increase stamina. According to the 2007 Partnership for a Drug-Free America Attitude Tracking Study, teens believe that the number one reason for using these drugs is to deal with the pressures and stress of school (For more information, see *Why Teens Turn to Prescription Drugs*).
- **Teens and teen influencers often don’t understand the true risk.** While parents and other teen influencers are aware of the danger of alcohol, smoking and illicit street drugs, they are less informed or concerned about prescription or over-the-counter medicines. The misuse of prescription drugs is every bit as dangerous as abusing other substances. Misusing these drugs or taking any without a prescription can have dangerous and perhaps deadly results.

- **Talking works.** Teens who consistently learn about the risks of prescription drugs at home are half as likely as their peers to try or use these and other drugs. Yet, only one in three parents talks with their teen about the dangers of prescription drugs. We know talking works. Rates of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drug abuse by teens have declined dramatically in the last decade due, in large part, to collective efforts of the anti-drug and prevention communities. History has shown that as the perception of risk goes up, teens' willingness to abuse or a misuse substance goes down. Educating them about the true dangers of prescription drug abuse in an interactive, compelling way is critical. (For more information about dispelling myths, see *Myth Busters*).

Back to Basics: Medication Safety

When taken correctly, prescription (and over-the-counter) drugs can go a long way to help relieve symptoms, fight certain infections and even improve the functioning and quality of life of those with common chronic illnesses such as arthritis, cancer, hypertension, heart disease, diabetes or depression. But, when they are misused or taken without a prescription, the consequences can be devastating and even deadly.

It's important for teen influencers to communicate with teens about the value of prescription drugs when they are used by the right person, at the right dose, at the right time and in the right way. Prescription drugs are only safe to use at the dose they've been prescribed *for you* by a doctor who knows *your health history*.

Still, educating teens about the risks of prescription drug abuse is only one piece of the puzzle. Parents, grandparents and other adults can help stop prescription drug abuse where it starts. Mobilize your community to take steps to safeguard medications.

Anyone who has teens living or possibly visiting in their household—parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, family friends—should:

- **Monitor** all medications in the home—prescription and over-the-counter medicines. Count the pills and check for missing medicine.
- **Safely store** medicines out of children's reach and sight. This should be a dry, cool place. Consider locking them up if necessary.
- **Properly dispose** of old or unused medicines. Most prescriptions drugs can be placed in a non-see-through container mixed with dirt or kitty litter and thrown in the garbage. Be sure to consult your pharmacist or the drug information accompanying your prescription as certain controlled substances should be flushed down the toilet.

For more information, go to www.smartrxdisposal.net, www.bemedwise.org, www.learnaboutrxsafety.org.

Sources: Partnership for a Drug-Free America, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, Nemours Foundation, SAMHSA, NCPIC.


A Troubling Trend: Why Teens Turn to Prescription Drugs

In their quest for independence, teens embark on a road of self discovery, constantly comparing themselves to their peers and pushing the limits of their independence. The teen years can be traumatic for some kids. And because the teen brain is not yet fully developed, their judgment and ability to make sound decisions is not as good as they (or you) might think.

Taken together, it's no wonder teens are prone to a variety of risk-taking behaviors. Understanding what might motivate them to abuse prescription drugs can help parents, teachers, coaches and others ask the right questions and intervene early.

So why prescription drugs? Here are a few reasons.

- **To escape or self-medicate.** Many teens admit using prescription drugs to help ease stress, get an added boost of energy, lose weight or feel good. They turn to the medicine cabinet to help manage their lives or escape problems. They are especially vulnerable to this behavior if they see parents or other adults using drugs inappropriately or to cope with life problems.
- **Thrill seeking.** For some, “pharming” or “bowling” parties are the “cool thing to do” and the latest way to get high. Teens put different kinds of prescription drugs in a bowl or a bag (called making “trail mix”) and will take a handful of pills. They often don’t know what drugs they are taking or how they will affect their mind or body.
- **Lack of self-esteem.** Some teens may think that stealing and supplying medications to their peers will help them fit in; taking them may take the edge off, giving them the courage and confidence to be sociable.
- **It’s cool and there’s less of a stigma.** Experimenting with prescription drugs is seen as the “thing to do.” Teens may think there is less shame taking these medications versus street drugs. Teens are often exposed to media—like movies and TV shows—that help normalize or even glamorize prescription drug use, while downplaying the potential dangers. Direct-to-consumer television and magazine ads commonly tout promises of medications to fix problems or enhance quality of life without providing a complete picture of the risks of abuse/misuse.
- **It’s safe.** Most teens think prescription drugs are the safer way to get high; they also feel less shame and believe these drugs have fewer side effects than illicit drugs. After all, they’ve seen their mom, dad, grandparents and other family members taking these medications to treat various illnesses. Teen fail to understand that these drugs are only safe for the person they have been prescribed to treat. When these same drugs are used by the wrong person or mixed with other substances, there can be grave and possibly deadly results.

- 
- **Prescription drugs are easy to find (and free).** Prescription drugs are readily available, and often free. All it may take is opening the medicine cabinet at home, at grandma and grandpa's or friends' houses. Some teens may not need to go in search of other peoples' medications. Instead, they misuse their own prescription medications in hopes of enhancing their pharmacological benefits.
 - **It's easier to hide.** Some teens say they turn to prescription drugs because the effects of these drugs are harder to detect; there is typically no smell or lingering effects as there is with pot, for example. They see these medications as an easier choice for a quick, cheap high.
 - **Parents are less likely to be angry.** One in five teens surveyed believe that parents wouldn't care as much if they got caught taking prescription medication compared to street drugs.

Warning Signs and Symptoms of Prescription Drug Abuse

Because teens are misusing and abusing so many different types of prescription drugs—from stimulants and painkillers to anti-depressants and anti-seizure drugs—it can be difficult to know what signs to watch for. Each drug has different effects, and mixing these drugs—which some teens do at “pharming” or “bowling” parties—is very dangerous and can lead to permanent organ damage and even death. And they aren’t just swallowing pills. Teens are also abusing prescription drugs by combining them with alcohol and/or crushing pills and then snorting or injecting them to get a quicker, more intense high.

Know the signs that may point to prescription drug abuse. Be observant and intervene early if you think your child, student or patient may have a problem with prescription drugs or other substances.

Physical Signs and Symptoms

Depending on the drug misused or abused you may notice the following.

Stimulants (medications used to speed up brain activity causing increased alertness, attention, and energy that come with elevated blood pressure, increased heart rate and breathing)

- Hyperactivity
- Shaking
- Sweating
- Dilated pupils
- Fast or irregular heart beat
- Elevated body temperature
- Seizures
- Paranoia/nervousness
- Repetitive behaviors
- Loss of appetite or sudden and unexplained weight loss

Sedatives/depressants (medications used to slow down or “depress” the functions of the brain and central nervous system)

- Loss of coordination
- Respiratory depression
- Slowed reflexes
- Slurred speech
- Coma

Opioid analgesics (medications used to treat moderate-to-severe pain)

- Sleep deprivation or “nodding”
- Pinpoint/constricted pupils, watery or droopy eyes
- Nausea, vomiting, constipation

- Slow slurred speech
- Slow gait
- Dry skin, itching, skin infections
- Constant flu-like symptoms
- Track marks (bruised skin around injection sites)

Behavioral Signs

Behavior changes may include:

- Sudden mood changes, including irritability, negative attitude, personality change
- Extreme changes in groups of friends or hangout locations
- Forgetfulness or clumsiness
- Lying or being deceitful, unaccounted time away from home/missed school days, avoiding eye contact
- Losing interest in personal appearance, extracurricular activities or sports
- "Munchies" or sudden changes in appetite
- Unusually poor performance in school, on the field, in debate club or other activities
- Borrowing money or having extra cash
- Acting especially angry or abusive, or engaging in reckless behavior
- Visiting pro-drug websites

Prescription Drugs Most Commonly Abused by Teens

	Used medically to	Abused by teens to	Drug names
Pain medications	Treat moderate-to-severe pain	Feel pleasure or increase sensations of well-being	Vicodin (hydrocodone), OxyContin (oxycodone), Percocet (oxycodone and acetaminophen), Actiq (fentanyl), Darvon (propoxyphene), codeine, morphine, methadone <i>Street names: Captain Cody, China Girl, hillbilly heroin, oxy 80s, percs, demmies.</i>
Stimulants	Treat attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), narcolepsy; short-term treatment of obesity. Increases the amounts of circulating brain	Increase mental alertness and concentration—perhaps around final exams or to manage coursework; get high; or lose weight.	Ritalin, Concerta, Adderall, Focalin, Dexedrine <i>Street names: uppers, vitamin R, Skippy</i>

	chemicals that raise blood pressure and heart rate, speed up breathing, decrease appetite and deprive sleep.		
Sedatives/Tranquilizers	Treat anxiety, severe stress, panic attacks, insomnia and some types of seizure disorders or muscle spasms.	Feel calm, at peace or drowsy; reduce stress or inhibitions.	Valium, Xanax, Ativan, Klonopin, Restoril, Ambien, Lunesta, Mebaral, Nembutal <i>Street names: candy, downers, tranks, barbs</i>

Sources: *The Partnership for a Drug-Free America, National Institute on Drug Abuse, Twombly & Holtz, 2008.*

All of these drugs can be addictive and cause serious withdrawal symptoms when stopped. Combinations of these drugs or if paired with alcohol or other substances can result in permanent organ damage or premature death.

If you or someone you know takes any of these or other prescription medications, make sure to keep them safely stored and out of children’s sight. Properly dispose of any unused or expired pills. If you notice that pills or bottles are missing, take the necessary steps to talk with your teens and provide supportive counsel.

For more information, download the Partnership for a Drug-Free America’s information sheet that details the top 13 drugs teens are abusing by visiting http://www.timetotalk.org/Downloads/ttt_drug_chart.pdf.

Help is Available

If you suspect a teen is abusing prescription drugs, there is help.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT)

240-276-2750
www.csat.samhsa.gov

SAMHSA’s National Helpline

800-662-HELP (800-662-4357) (English and Spanish)
800-487-4889 (TDD)

Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator:

240-276-2548
www.samhsa.gov/treatment

Myth Busters: 6 Myths about Teens and Prescription Drug Abuse

Myth #1: Prescription medications are safer to abuse than other illicit substances.

Truth: Many teens incorrectly believe that prescription drugs are the safer way to get high, cope with stress or perform better at school or on the field. After all, they've seen their moms, dads, grandparents and other family members take the very same medications to treat various illnesses. So, how bad can they be? Very.

When misused or taken without a doctor's prescription, these drugs can be just as harmful as illegal street drugs. Mixing different prescription drugs together or with alcohol or other substances—as many teens do—can have grave and possibly deadly consequences.

When talking to teens, you might say: Prescription drugs are very powerful medications. If you take these medications inappropriately or without a prescription, there is no telling how they may affect you. Abusing these drugs can stop your heart, your breathing or both. Bottom line: The abuse of prescription drugs is every bit as dangerous as abusing other substances.

Myth #2: Unlike underage drinking and marijuana use, using and sharing prescription medications is legal.

Truth: Using these drugs without a doctor's prescription or abusing someone else's prescriptions—or your own—is always harmful, not to mention illegal.

When talking to teens, you might ask and say: Has anyone asked you for prescription drugs? Did you know that selling or giving prescription drugs to a friend is illegal? Not only can these medications make healthy kids very sick, you could also end up in jail. It's against the law for you or your friends to possess certain prescription drugs like strong pain medications without a prescription. Only a doctor or pharmacist can legally give you these medications.

Myth #3: Everyone is doing it.

Truth: While one in five teens admits to using prescription drugs recreationally to get high or help manage their lives, the vast majority (80 percent) are not abusing these drugs. Try not to normalize teen prescription drug abuse. It's important to avoid language that suggests a majority of teens are abusing prescription drugs and to correct your teen if they think that "everybody's doing it."

Myth #4: Teens often get prescription medications from drug dealers on the street.

Truth: Unfortunately, it's very easy for teens to get their hands on prescription drugs. In fact, prescription drug abuse often starts at the nearest medicine cabinet. The majority of teens (8 out of 10) get prescription drugs from friends or relatives by stealing, buying or simply asking for them, according to the Partnership for a

Drug-Free America. Some teens also get these drugs from strangers, including drug dealers or by purchasing them online at illegal Internet pharmacies.

Myth #5: It won't happen to my teen.

Truth: This is very dangerous thinking. The reality is that every teenager—even the most accomplished—is vulnerable.

The teen years are full of uncertainties. Teens are on a road to self discovery, constantly comparing themselves to their peers and pushing the limits of their independence. They want to fit in and be well liked, while also balancing other goals, like getting into a good college. Since the teen brain is not yet fully developed, their judgment and ability to make sound decisions is not as good as they (or you) might think.

Taken together, it's no wonder teens are prone to a variety of risk-taking behaviors. Understanding what might motivate them to abuse prescription drugs can help parents, teachers, coaches and others ask the right questions and intervene. The good news is that kids who continue to learn about the risks of drugs at home are up to 50 percent less likely to use drugs than those who are not taught about these dangers.

Myth #6: Misusing prescription drugs is fine “every once and a while,” and doing so can help me better manage my life and feel better.

Teens may perceive prescription drugs to be safer than illicit drugs largely because doctors prescribe them and messages about their use are widely available—in popular media like movies or television and magazine advertisements. But these drugs are just as dangerous as street drugs and, because most addictions start during adolescence, experimenting with prescription medications or any other drug can be a very slippery slope.

Prescription drugs may affect brain function. For a person who needs a medication for a legitimate medical reason, this change may correct a deficit or imbalance. For an otherwise healthy brain, the changes caused by chronic abuse of these drugs can be damaging, addicting or even life-threatening.

Parents, teachers, coaches and healthcare providers should try to empathize with the pressures teens face and offer tips and strategies for dealing with stress in a healthy way. For example, exercising, eating well or seeking counseling to help manage anxiety. It's also important to help bolster their self-esteem by encouraging them to focus on things they are good at or enjoy, like playing sports, joining clubs, or volunteering in the community.

When talking to teens, you might say: When prescription drugs are abused, they can be as addictive and dangerous as street drugs. You can die from abusing prescription drugs . . . even the first time.

EDUCATORS: Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer

There's a new drug of choice among teens these days; and it's as close as the nearest medicine cabinet.

While the rates of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drug abuse are down overall, more and more teens are abusing prescription drugs. One in five teens (or 4.5 million) report using prescription medication recreationally either to get high or because they believe these medications might help mitigate stress or depression. It's surprisingly easy for teens to get their hands on prescription drugs from their families' medicine cabinets, someone's purse or even a schoolmate's locker.

Schools are uniquely positioned to identify and help prevent prescription and over-the-counter drug abuse among teens. Whether you are a teacher, athletic coach, librarian, guidance counselor or other school-based mentor, you can take steps to help prevent prescription drug abuse.

Educators & Schools Matter

- Students spend at least 7 hours at school each day; for some students this is actually more time than they spend with their parents.
- For students who don't have strong support at home, school may be the only place they have a supportive adult to speak to.
- Because adolescents can sometimes “tune out” their parents, teachers have the chance to make a connection and reinforce healthy life choices. A teen may roll their eyes at a parent, but may listen to a teacher they trust.
- Teachers and coaches are often the ones who overhear Monday morning conversations about the weekend's activities. Teens often speak more freely in front of teachers or coaches than parents.
- Teachers and coaches may see behavior changes before parents do—a slip in academic or athletic performance, acting out in class or unexplained absences—and can intervene early.

The best lesson you can give is helping teens know how to make healthy life choices and avoid prescription drug abuse and other high-risk behaviors. Teachers, coaches, administrators and other school-based educators can make a difference.

10 Things You Can Do to Make a Difference

Below are some strategies to help in your efforts to educate teens and other teen influencers about teen prescription drug abuse and help mobilize your school and local community to take steps to prevent prescription drug abuse.

No matter what your role in the school, it's important to look for teachable moments—a window of time to increase awareness of the problem and relay important drug prevention messages. Whether it's in the hallway, on the field or during other after-school activities, take advantage of opportunities to educate teens about the dangers of prescription drugs and promote healthy alternatives. Even a brief conversation can help steer a teen in the right direction.

All schools are different. Check with your school's administration and guidance department before implementing these ideas.

1. **Get on the health or science education agenda.** Talk with the health education/wellness and science teachers, student assistance coordinators or school nurses at your school to make sure they include information about the dangers of misusing or abusing prescription drugs as part of their regular drug and alcohol prevention classes. Inform or remind your colleagues that prescription drugs have become the new drug of choice. More teens are abusing prescription medications than any illicit drug, except marijuana, and they are every bit as dangerous. The most commonly abused prescription drugs are strong pain medications like hydrocodone (Vicodin, Lortab) and oxycodone (Percocet, OxyContin), sedatives including Ritalin or Adderall or stimulants like Valium or Xanax.

Suggest that they make this an interactive activity, by presenting statements and asking students to indicate whether they are true or false (either with a thumbs up or down or standing up or remaining seated—this will help to avoid making it too personal). For example, "Prescription drugs are prescribed by doctors so using them even if it's not your medicine is safe. True or false?" Then give the correct answer and have teens talk about why it isn't safe. You could also consider conducting a classroom debate.

2. **Leverage your role as a mentor.** For example, if you serve as an advisor to students as part of homeroom or other mentoring program, you've probably already established a rapport and trust with these students. Try to talk about the issue of prescription drug abuse one-on-one or as a small group. You may want to start the dialogue by asking:
 - Has anyone asked if you (or your parents or grandparents) have any leftover prescription medications that they can have or buy?
 - Have you ever shared your medication with a friend?

- What do you and your friends do after school? At parties?
- Do any of your classmates use prescription drugs? Which ones?

If you do this exercise as a group, give them the option of sharing their answers aloud or by writing them on a piece of paper so their responses are anonymous.

3. **Team up with student clubs that promote healthy decisions and behaviors.** Student-led groups like Student Against Descriptive Decisions (SADD) or peer counseling can help champion the issue of combating prescription drug abuse and may be willing to display educational materials during open houses, school orientations and health fairs. Visit www.talkaboutrx.org to download brochures and find other helpful resources.
4. **Extend the lesson.** Offer to present the *Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer* workshop at an upcoming staff training or Parent Teacher Association meeting so more teen influencers are in the know and can help make a difference.
5. **Power of coaching.** Whether its varsity or JV athletics, coaches and athletes spend many hours together on the field. It's no surprise that coaches have more consistent opportunities to share drug prevention messages and may see changes in behaviors or mood early on. Because they are such strong role models for impressionable teens, coaches need to be aware of the trend toward misusing or abusing prescription drugs and educate their players.
 - Talk to athletes who show signs of prescription drug abuse or who you suspect are engaged in other high-risk behaviors (See *Teen Prescription Drug Abuse: Warning Signs and Symptoms* handout).
 - Take the opportunity to tell parents about this issue during pre-season meetings. You can keep it as simple as "I hope you are all aware of the growing problem of prescription drug abuse. Every teen is at-risk and they are finding these drugs in the medicine cabinet at home or through other relatives or peers."
 - Make sure that prescription drug abuse is included (along with alcohol, steroids and illicit substances) as part of the written or verbal code of conduct you have with athletes and hold kids accountable. It's important to follow through in disciplining any breaks in conduct, even with "star" players.
6. **Listen up and intervene if needed.** If you overhear students talking about "pharming" parties or a specific student abusing prescription or other drugs, report this to the guidance department or administration and find out how best to handle the situation. If appropriate, join the conversation to correct misinformation and warn them about the dangers of abusing these medications (See *Myth Busters: 6 Misunderstanding about Teen Prescription Drug Abuse* handout).
7. **Be a resource to parents and teens.** Alert parents to the growing problem of teen abuse of prescription drugs and refer them to the handouts, as well as other anti-drug resources (see the listing of *Resources*). Talk with parents about monitoring, safely storing and disposing prescription medications at their home and those of older relatives,

who may be taking multiple medications. Remind parents and your students that there is help within the school. Guidance counselors, school social workers, psychologists and nurses are on hand to talk with students and lend their support. These professionals can also get to the root of the problem, identifying the true motivation for using these drugs and being on the lookout for problematic behaviors.

8. **Take action locally.** Stay current about the prescription drug abuse problem, as well as any local efforts to promote drug-free, safe schools. Many states have coalitions working on these issues. You can find out if there is one in your area by contacting the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) at www.cadca.org or the Partnership for a Drug-Free America at www.drugfree.org. Remember that religious and community organizations that are already working with teens and their families can also help spread the word to parents and other teen influencers (e.g., Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA/YWCA).
9. **Pay attention to the signs.** Whether you're a teacher, librarian, coach, guidance counselor or school security guard, being observant and noticing changes in student behavior and attitude is part of the job. If you suspect something isn't quite right with one of your students, pull him or her aside to find out what might be going on in his or her life. You may want to ask questions like "What's going on today?" or "How come you seem so distracted?" Keep a cheat sheet on the signs and symptoms of prescription drug abuse handy so that you know what to look for (See *Warning Signs and Symptoms of Prescription Drug Abuse*).
10. **Enlist your Title IV representatives.** Federal Title IV funding allocates money to programming and outreach for safe and drug-free schools. Educate your Title IV representatives about the growing teen prescription drug abuse problem. Enlist their help to promote prescription drug education in your local school district. Find out if they are having a meeting at which you or they could present the *Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer* workshop.

For more information, visit www.talkaboutrx.org to download additional materials including brochures, checklists and more. Here you will also find a list of helpful resources and programs to enhance your efforts to stop teen prescription drug abuse.

FROM THE TOP DOWN

Don't forget to engage and enlist a champion within your school's administration. Make sure this person is in the know about the problem of prescription drug abuse among teens. Urge that additional steps are taken by the school system to help inform other teen influencers, including faculty and parents. Ask whether

- The school includes prescription drug abuse as part of its survey of students so this information can be tracked and quantified.
- A prevention message about teen prescription drug abuse can be sent to the faculty via list serv or posted to a staff-only Intranet
- Prescription drug abuse can be incorporated into the school/district policy and implemented consistently
- The superintendent can address the issue in his or her newsletter to parents
- Administration can review the current health education curriculum for elementary, middle school and high schools in district and integrate the misuse and abuse of prescription drugs into alcohol and drug prevention lessons

HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS: Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer

There's a new drug of choice among teens these days; and it may be as close as the nearest medicine cabinet.

While rates of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drug abuse are down overall, more and more teens are abusing prescription drugs. One in five teens (or 4.5 million) report using prescription medication recreationally either to get high or because they believe these medications might help mitigate stress or depression. It's surprisingly easy for teens to get their hands on prescription drugs from their families' medicine cabinets, someone's purse or even a schoolmate's locker.

Healthcare providers are uniquely positioned to identify and help prevent prescription and over-the-counter drug abuse by teens. Whether you're a doctor, nurse, pharmacist, social worker or other community or school-based healthcare provider, you can take steps to help prevent prescription drug abuse.

To help get to the source of the problem, healthcare providers (especially prescribers) should talk to *all* patients about the safe use of medications, including knowing what prescription drugs they and other family members use, monitoring and safely storing these medications so they are out of children's' sight and reach, and properly disposing of any unused or expired prescriptions. School-based healthcare providers—school nurses, psychologists and social workers—are especially attuned to the stressors facing teens these days and can often pick up on teens at risk for drug-taking behaviors.

Healthcare Providers Matter

- Healthcare providers across a variety of settings have regular opportunities to assess emotional and physical development of teenage patients, as well as their adjustment to life changes and stressors. Ongoing check-ins with teens about their physical and mental well being is important and provides opportunities to talk to with them about drug-taking behaviors, especially with those who show signs of being at risk for misusing or abusing drugs.
- By focusing on principles of safe medication use with teens, healthcare providers can help normalize these practices and dispel myths about prescription drug use and abuse.

- Healthcare providers not only have the ability to prescribe medications appropriately, but they also have the skills and training needed to identify prescription drug abuse and help teens and their parents recognize the problem early on.
- Research shows that by talking about substance abuse problems with patients, medical professionals can positively impact a patient's willingness to address addiction. Talking with teens is especially important given their propensity for risk-taking behaviors and because most addictions start during adolescence.

Take advantage of opportunities to talk to teenage patients about how to make healthy life choices and avoid prescription drug abuse and other high-risk behaviors. Doctors, nurses and other community and school-based health professionals can make a difference.

10 Things You Can Do to Make a Difference

Below are steps you can take to educate teens and other teen influencers about teen prescription drug abuse and help mobilize your colleagues and local community to do their part to help prevent prescription drug abuse.

Look for teachable moments—a window of time to increase awareness of the problem and relay important drug prevention messages—when consulting with teens or their parents. Whether it's in the exam room or another healthcare setting, take advantage of opportunities to educate teens about the dangers of prescription drugs and promote healthy alternatives. Even a brief conversation can help steer a teen in the right direction.

- **Communicate the risks.** Talk to teens to correct misinformation and warn them about the dangers of abusing prescription medications. Let them know that just because prescription drugs are legal, that doesn't mean they're safe, especially when they are used in the wrong way or by someone for whom they weren't prescribed. Emphasize that mixing drugs can be particularly dangerous and that the only safe way to take a prescription medication is under the care and supervision of a medical professional. Give them some concrete examples of the health risks associated with prescription drug abuse, including what too many stimulants, sedatives and/or painkillers can do to their bodies. *This is important because history has shown us that as the perception of risk goes up, teens' willingness to abuse or a misuse substance goes down.*
- **Closely monitor prescriptions.** Keep a close eye on teens for whom you've prescribed medications, especially those most commonly abused—pain relievers, stimulants and sedatives. Take note of any unusual increases in the amount of a medication needed or requests for refills before the prescribed dose should have run out. This may be the first sign of abuse or misuse. If you suspect something isn't quite right with one of your patients, talk to the teen and his or her parents immediately to find out what's going on.

3. **Know what to look for.** As a medical professional, being observant and noticing changes in patient behavior and attitude is part of your job. Make sure you and your staff/colleagues are familiar with the signs and symptoms of prescription drug abuse so that you can recognize a problem before it gets too serious (See *Warning Signs and Symptoms of Prescription Drug Abuse*).
4. **Think about screening and ask the right questions.** If you don't already, consider screening patients for tobacco, alcohol, illicit or nonmedical prescription drug use. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) has a new online drug screening tool called NIDAMED to help identify patients who are misusing or abusing prescription drugs or other substances. This interactive resource guides clinicians through a series of short questions and, based on the patients responses, generates a substance abuse risk score that suggests the level of intervention needed.

Even if you haven't implemented a formal screening process, try to broach the topic of prescription drug abuse with your teen patients during their appointments. You may want to start the dialogue by asking:

- Have you ever shared your medication with a friend or another person?
 - Have you ever taken a drug that was not prescribed to you?
 - Do any of your classmates use prescriptions drugs? Which ones?
 - Has anyone asked if you (or your parents, grandparents or anyone else) have any leftover prescription medication they can have or buy?
5. **Check in with parents.** Make a point to ask the parents if they've noticed any behavior changes (e.g., mood swings, depression, extreme tiredness, extreme change in friends, a drop in grades or class attendance) or physical changes (e.g., unexplained weight loss, acne). While some of these changes can be common in the teen years, they may also be red flags for drug abuse. Alert parents to the growing problem of teen abuse of prescription drugs and refer them to the handouts, as well as other anti-drug resources (see Resource listing). Talk with them about monitoring, safely storing and disposing prescription medications at their home and those of older relatives, who are most likely taking multiple medications.

Remind parents and teens that there is help within their school or community. Guidance counselors, school social workers, psychologists and nurses are on hand to talk with students.

6. **Reinforce positive behaviors.** Lifetime habits may form during the teen years. In addition to discouraging potentially risky health behaviors like prescription drug abuse, it's also important for healthcare providers to reinforce positive health behaviors (e.g. exercise, healthy eating). Give teens some tips and techniques for coping with stress and anxiety in a healthy way.
7. **Team up.** Doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other health professionals should work together to address the potential for prescription drug abuse in their communities. Each has a role to play. For example, pharmacists are able to give quick, face-to-face reminders about the safe and legal use of prescription drugs and give tips on what parents can do to keep medications from ending up in the wrong hands.
8. **Spread the word.** Keep your office or clinic stocked with information and educational materials that parents and teens can read to further educate themselves on the issue and help get the word out to others. Take time to create a display in your waiting room to raise awareness about the issue and help answer parent questions. And you don't have to reinvent the wheel. Many materials and tools are already available through the *Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer* program and other national organizations, such as the Partnership for a Drug-Free America.
9. **Be a leader.** Physicians and other healthcare providers have enormous credibility and influence in the community and can serve as local champions to raise awareness about the health risks facing teens. Offer to give the *Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer* workshop to local schools and community organizations. Remember that religious and community organizations that are already working with youth and their families can also help spread the word to parents and other teen influencers (e.g., Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA/YWCA). Your knowledge on teen health will be a welcome addition to local groups working to prevent prescription drug abuse.
10. **Take action locally.** Consider partnering with local community anti-drug coalition. You can find out if there is one in your area by contacting the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) at www.cadca.org or the Partnership for a Drug-Free America at www.drugfree.org. Sign up to speak at your local Rotary Club, Parent/teacher group, places of worship or other places where you have an audience that is actively engaged with the welfare of teens.

PARENTS: Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer

As a parent you may have spoken to your teen about the harmful effects of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs, such as marijuana or ecstasy. But did you know that legally prescribed drugs are also a cause for concern? Prescription drugs are fast becoming the new drug of choice among teens; and they may be as close as your or a grandparent's medicine cabinet.

While the rates of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drug abuse are down overall, more and more teens are abusing prescription drugs—the same ones used to legitimately relieve pain and treat conditions such as anxiety and sleep disorders, depression and attention deficit disorder. One in five teens (or 4.5 million) report using prescription medication recreationally to get high or help manage stress or depression. It's surprisingly easy for teens to get their hands on prescription drugs from their families' medicine cabinets, someone's purse, online, or even a schoolmate's locker.

As you might remember, the teen years can be among the most difficult in a child's development. Teens find themselves on an unsteady road of self discovery, constantly comparing themselves to their peers, wanting to be accepted and, at the same time, pushing the limits of their independence. They feel the pressure to do well at school and get into a good college, all the while dealing with the angst of puberty including physical changes and surges in hormones. At some point, even the most reliable of teen may feel the pressure to start drinking, smoking pot or experimenting with other drugs.

The desire to feel good or get high ranks much lower as a motivation when misusing prescription drugs as compared to other types of adolescent drug use. More often, teens turn to prescription drugs to help manage their daily lives—to lower stress and anxiety, boost their mood or increase performance.

Unfortunately, many teens falsely believe that prescription drugs less dangerous than other substances. They may not know what drugs they are taking or how they will affect them. The hidden dangers of prescription drug misuse include dependence, slower brain activity, irregular heartbeats, dangerously high body temperature, heart failure, or potentially deadly seizures. Parents can help shape teens' decision-making about drug use by educating them about the dangers of prescription drugs and promoting healthy alternatives.

Don't assume alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs are the only threats!

The misuse and abuse of prescription medications is an under-recognized problem that puts young lives at risk.

Parents often play a greater, more protective role than peers in terms of influencing adolescent decision-making about drug use. Yet only one in three parents discusses the risks of abusing prescription drugs with their kids.

Parents Matter

- Contrary to what many might believe, teens care very deeply about what their parents think.
- Many teens report that their parents have the greatest influence on their drug use attitudes and decisions.
- Kids who continue to learn about the risks of drugs at home are up to 50 percent less likely to use drugs than those who are not taught about these dangers.
- When parents express strong disapproval of drug use, teens are far less likely to engage in substance use.
- Parents (and other family members) are in the best position to reduce access to prescription drugs by locking them up and properly disposing of expired or unused medicines.

10 Things You Can Do to Make a Difference

Below are some things you and other parents can do to help protect teens from prescription drug abuse and other high risk behaviors.

1. **Listen up.** Listening to and empathizing with your teen are among the most important things you can do. Doing so will help create a loving, safe and open environment for your teen to talk about everyday concerns—even tough topics like alcohol and drugs.
2. **Make time to talk.** Talking with teens on an ongoing basis can help motivate them to make smart, healthy choices. Of course, figuring out when and exactly what to say to your teen about high risk behaviors like alcohol, tobacco, illicit and prescription drug use can be difficult. Use news reports or scenes of popular movies to help start the conversation. Stay involved in your teen's life and ask open-ended questions (How are you doing? What are the big social plans this weekend? Is anything bothering you?).

Don't lecture--that's a sure way to get your teen to tune you out. Let teens know you are there whenever they need to talk about something that's troubling them, even if it's related to topics they might be nervous to bring up (drugs, alcohol, sex).

In talking with teens, don't simply instruct them not to misuse prescription drugs. Explain *why* this behavior is harmful. Remember, as tall as they're getting, the teen brain isn't fully developed. That means their impulse control, judgment and ability to understand the consequences of certain behaviors is not as good as they (or you) might think. Be their voice of reason. What can they expect will happen tomorrow if they (or their friends) decide to misuse drugs today? Give concrete examples of the risks and dangers of prescription drug abuse (misusing or combining these drugs can cause permanent organ damage, lead to addiction, ruin their chances of getting into a good college).

When appropriate, try to use humor and even some gentle sarcasm to start the conversation. Even a brief conversation can help steer teens in the right direction.

3. **Be observant.** Monitor your teen's use of the Internet and watch for unaccounted time away from home and other signs of trouble (for example, switching groups of friends or hangout locations, sudden mood changes, losing interest in activities or sports, lying, poor performance at school). Pro-drug web sites and illegal Internet pharmacies can provide easy access to prescription and other drugs.
4. **Set limits.** Despite the fact that adolescents are constantly challenging authority figures, they need or want limit-setting. Sitting down with your teen to set clear and consistent expectations provides them with a safe boundary in which to grow and function. According to experts, teens are less likely to engage in risky behaviors when parents set and enforce rules.

Most children—regardless of their age—want to please their parents. Send a clear message that you will be disappointed if he/she starts using drugs. Hold teens accountable when they break the rules (even though it's hard and you feel like the bad guy). The more you let them off the hook, the worse the behavior usually gets. You can be firm, while also creating an environment in which they will feel safe sharing any mistakes they've made.

5. **Talk to parents of other teens.** Make sure other parents are aware that prescription drug abuse is a growing problem. Consider sharing tips and opportunities for teachable moments with other parents by logging onto the Partnership for a Drug-Free America's Time to Talk chat at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/timetotalk/> or plan to give the *Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer* workshop to other parents in your neighborhood or school district.
6. **Dispel myths.** It's important to set the record straight about the dangers of prescription drug abuse and present the facts. Inform teens and others that abusing prescription drugs is just as dangerous as other substances, and it can also be as addictive. There is no safe way to get "high," and it's not okay to rely on these drugs to help manage stress or get "high," even "every once and a while." And although teens might think "everyone is doing it," tell them that while one in five teens abuse prescription drugs, four out of five are not.

Starting a dialogue

Here are some additional resources that might help.

Time to Talk

www.timetotalk.org provides practical tips and tools to help parents reach out to children of all ages about tough issues like drug and alcohol abuse to help them stay healthy and drug-free.

Not in My House

www.drugfree.org/notinmyhouse gives parents tips for talking with teens, common lingo used by teens and advice from experts and how to make your house medication safe.

Students Against Destructive Decisions

www.sadd.org/contract SADD's Life Contract was created to help teens and parents talk about potentially destructive decisions related to alcohol, drugs, peer pressure and behavior.

7. **Help give teens an escape route.** Talk to them about alternative ways to get out of a bad situation. Offer to pick them up wherever they are if they are in trouble. Give them easy ways to say “no” so they don’t feel “uncool” when talking to their peers. Here are some examples:

“I don’t want to ruin my season/get in trouble with the coach.”

“I have to do something with my parents really early tomorrow morning.”

“I’m the designated driver.”

“I don’t need drugs to have fun.”

“I’m not interested.”

8. **Encourage healthy alternatives.** Offer teens guidance on dealing with life’s stressors. Empathize with the pressures they face at school, with friends and even at home. Suggest positive outlets to relieve stress (for example, joining a sports team or youth group, learning to play an instrument, volunteering in the community). Spend time with your teen. Plan activities you can do together—cooking, exercising, going on a weekend road trip or renting a movie. Give positive reinforce for healthy choices and draw attention to their skills and talents to help boost their self-esteem.


9. **Practice good medicine safety and disposal.** Kids learn by example. Be aware of how you and others use prescription drugs in front of teens and younger children. If you take medications, explain why and stress that these are powerful medications that are only safe to use under a doctor’s care. Talk about why it’s not safe to use someone else’s medications.

Keep tabs on the medications—over-the-counter and prescription drugs—you and other relatives have in your homes. Avoid stockpiling prescription medicines and keep them in a safe place out of children’s sight and reach. Many people will save medications, especially antibiotics, pain or sleep medications, for themselves or other family members to use in “emergency” situations and often think nothing of it.

Not only does this set a bad example, it also gives teens access to these drugs, which helps drive the teen prescription drug abuse problem. Sharing these medications can be dangerous and it may also be illegal. Take steps to promptly and properly dispose of any unused or expired prescription drugs. For more information, go to www.smartrxdisposal.net.

If your teen takes a prescription drug for a medical condition or following surgery or an injury (getting wisdom teeth pulled, broken leg), encourage him/her to talk to the doctor about side effects and what to watch for. Help prepare him/her to say “no” if a classmate asks for some of their medication.

10. **Team up with your school, the guidance department or Parent Teacher Association.** Champion the issue of preventing prescription drug abuse among teens in your community. Offer to give the *Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer* workshop at your local library, at an upcoming school training or PTA meeting so that more teen influencers are in the know and can help make a difference. Find out if the school is willing to give you dedicated space to display educational materials during open houses, school orientations and health fairs. Visit www.talkaboutrx.org to download brochures and find other helpful resources.



Learn about local efforts to promote drug-free, safe schools. Many states have coalitions working on these issues. You can find out if there is one in your area by contacting the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) at www.cadca.org or the Partnership for a Drug-Free America at www.drugfree.org.

Help is Available! If you suspect a teen is abusing prescription drugs, there is help.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline
800-662-HELP (800-662-4357) (English and Spanish)
800-487-4889 (TDD)

Sample Commitment Card

Give each participant a commitment card at the end of the workshop. Encourage them to write down one thing they pledge to do to help address the problem of teen prescription drug abuse either in their home, at school, on the field or in their practice.



Commit to Make a Difference!



Write down one thing you plan to do following this workshop to help make a difference.

I pledge to help prevent teen prescription drug abuse in my community by:

Keep this card in your wallet or purse as a reminder of the important role you play in helping teens make positive life choices.

For more information and updated resources, visit the National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPBE) at www.talkaboutrx.org.

Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer: What You Can Do To Help Prevent Teen Prescription Drug Abuse



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Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer: What You Can Do To Help Prevent Teen Prescription Drug Abuse



Participant Evaluation Form

Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer: *What You Can Do to Help Prevent Teen Prescription Drug Abuse*

Thank you for being a part of today’s workshop. Please take a moment to answer the questions below. We greatly appreciate your feedback. This survey will be used to improve future programs.

On a scale of 1 to 4 (one being excellent and four being very poor), please circle your overall rating of today’s presentation

1 –Excellent 2 – Good 3 – Poor 4 – Very Poor

On a scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree, please indicate if today’s workshop:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Added to my knowledge of prescription drug abuse among teens.				
The material was presented in a way that was easy to understand.				
Increased my knowledge about the role teen influencers can play/steps I can take to help prevent prescription drug abuse among teens.				
Inspired me to take action, whether it’s broaching the subject with teens, talking with parents, sharing the materials or giving this workshop to another group.				

What information was most valuable?	
Was anything missing from this program based on your expectations? If so, what?	
How can we make this workshop more effective or interesting?	
How are you planning to use what you learned today? (What did you write on your commitment card?)	

How did you learn about this presentation? (Please circle all that apply)

Newspaper Flyer E-mail Friend/Colleague
Professional Organization
Other _____

Which best describes you? (Please circle one)

Parent Teacher Coach Clinician (pediatrician, school nurse, counselor)
Other teen influencer (please describe)

Would you recommend this training to other friends or colleagues? _____ Yes _____ No

If you would like to provide additional comments, please do so below.

Please give this form back to the presenter. Thank you for your feedback.



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