

The abuse of prescription and over-the-counter drugs

A growing problem for teens and schools

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What is Drug Abuse?

- *Drug Abuse* is defined as using drugs in such a way that they harm one's health, impair one's physical or mental functioning, or interfere with one's social life. (Henslin, 2008)
- Drug Abuse (Inaba & Cohen, 2007)
- Experiment vs. Dependence (Inaba & Cohen, 2007)

How Prevalent is Prescription Drug Abuse among Teens?

- Nearly 1 in 5 Teens report abusing prescription Medication to get high. (The Partnership for a Drug Free America, 2007)
- 1 out of 10 Teens report abusing cough medicine to get high. (The Partnership for a Drug Free America, 2007)
- In 2005, 2.1 million teens abused prescription drugs. (Office of National Drug Control Policy, 2007)
- Prescription Drugs are the most commonly abused drugs among 12-13 year olds. (Office of National Drug Control Policy, 2007)

Commonly Abused Prescriptions & Over-the-Counter Medications

- Prescription Pain Relievers
 - Examples: OxyContin (*Oxy, O.C.*), Vicodin (*Vike, Vitamin V*), Percocet (*Percs*) and Demerol
- CNS Depressants/Sedatives
 - Examples: Valium, Xanax, Klonopin, Soma, and Quaaludes
- Stimulants
 - Examples: Ritalin, Dexedrine, Adderall, and Concerta
- Over-the-Counter (OTC) Cough & Cold
 - Examples: Robitussin (*Robo, Tussin*), Vicks Formula 44 Cough Relief (*Dex, Red Devils, Triple C, Skittles, Syrup*)

(Partnership for a Drug-Free America, 2007)

How do prescription drugs get into the hands of teens?

- Majority of Prescription drugs are obtained from friends and family.
 - 51-60% are FREE from a friend or relative.
 - 37-45% are bought from a friend or relative.
 - 20-24% are taken from a friend or relative.
 - 2-5% are purchased on the internet.

(Johnston et al., 2009)

Physiological Warning Signs

- Effects of Pain Relievers
 - Constricted pupils, nausea, and a slower respiratory rate
- Effects of Sedatives
 - Slurred speech, sluggishness, disorientation, and lack of coordination
- Effects of Stimulants
 - Increased alertness and energy, lack of appetite, flushed skin, jumpy, shaky hands, and restlessness
- Effects of O-T-C Cough & Cold Medicines
 - Slurred speech, vomiting, dizziness, disorientation, hallucinations, and tachycardia

(Partnership for a Drug-Free America, 2007)

Behavioral Warning Signs

- Truancy
- Loss of interest in school work
- Loss of interest in extra curricular activities
- Failure to fulfill responsibilities in school
- Complaints from teachers

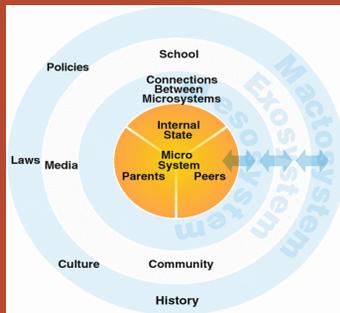
(Partnership for a Drug-Free America, 2007)

Interventions in Schools

- Zero Tolerance Policy
 - Automatic suspension and/or expulsion
- Alternatives to Zero Tolerance Policy
 - Early intervention
 - Individualized Identification

(NASP, 2008)

Social Ecological Framework



(Twombly, 2008)

Cultural and Historical Context

- Changes in medical field
 - Pain management- prescriptions for hydrocodone and oxycodone increased 380% between 1992 to 2002
- Changes in Media
 - 1997 FDA relaxed prohibitions against direct to consumer advertising
 - Americans see 16 hours of drug commercials a year
 - Due to media exposure, people think meds are safer than illicit drugs

(Twombly, 2008)

Challenges for Prevention

- Motivations teens report for misuse
- The normative influence of direct to consumer advertising
- Need to correct misperceptions about risk without stigmatizing legitimate use

(Twombly, 2008)

Prevention Recommendations

- Microsystem
- Psychoeducation outreach to parents on risks of misuse
 - Provide concrete strategies
 - Info on how to talk to kids
 - Responsibility as gatekeepers of meds
 - Methods to secure and monitor meds
 - Reasons why kids misuse prescriptions

(Twombly, 2008)

Prevention Recommendations

(cont'd)

- Exosystem
 - School Based Prevention
 - Educate students on risk of misuse
 - Science Education Prevention shown to positively impact knowledge and attitudes regarding drugs of abuse

(Twombly, 2008)

Social Control Theory

- Conformity is based on the internalization of societal values and norms, and integration into prosocial groups. A bond develops between an individual and society that deters him/her from violating the rules.
- Four Dimensions of social bond:
 - Attachment
 - Commitment
 - Involvement
 - Belief
- Stronger the bond, more conformity; weaker bond, more likelihood for deviant behavior.

(Ford, 2009)

Research Support of the Social Control Theory

- From the 2005 National Survey of Drug Use and Health, 18,678 respondents ages 12 to 17
 - Females more likely to misuse prescription medications
 - Strongest correlate of misuse of prescription drugs is substance use (binge drinking and illicit drug use)
 - Students with a stronger bond to school are less likely to report misuse of prescription drugs
 - Students who are strongly bonded to parents are less likely to report any misuse of prescription drugs
 - Adolescents with family income lower than 20,000 are at increased risk for misuse of prescription medication
 - Adolescents who live outside major metro are at an increased risk

(Ford, 2009)

Choosing a Prevention Program

- Ideally have family, school, and community prevention
 - Enhance protective factors
 - Reduce risk factors

(NIDA, 2003)

Risk Factors/Protective Factors

Risk Factors	Domain	Protective Factors
Early Aggressive Behavior	Individual	Impulse Control
Lack of Parental Supervision	Family	Parental Monitoring
Substance Abuse	Peer	Academic Competence
Drug Availability	School	Antidrug Use Policies
Poverty	Community	Strong Neighborhood Attachment

(NIDA, 2003)

Characteristics of Effective Prevention Programs

- Address all forms of drug abuse
- Specifically address local drug issues
- Target Modifiable Risk Factors
- Strengthen Identifiable Protective Factors
- Tailor to audience and to address risks associated with specific population

(NIDA, 2003)

Effective Prevention for Middle & High School

- Increase academic skills and social competence
- Study habits and academic support
- Communication
- Peer relationships
- Self-efficacy and assertiveness
- Drug resistance skills
- Reinforcement of antidrug attitudes
- Strengthening of personal commitments against drug abuse

(NIDA, 2003)

Nursing Prevention Kit- Smart Moves, Smart Choices

(National Association of School Nurses)

- Designed to assist school nurses and school staff in prevention, identification, and management of adolescent prescription drug misuse and abuse.
 - Specific protocol for managing prescription disbursement in schools.
 - Medications are to be administered by school nurses & by non-health professionals if not nurses.
 - Medications are kept locked and in original pharmacy container.
 - Students are observed while taking medications.
 - Obtain parental and physician authorization to administer medication.

(NASN, 2009)

Examples of Research Based Prevention Programs

- **Caring School Community Program** - universal family-plus-school program to reduce risk and bolster protective factors among elementary school children.
- **Classroom-Centered (CC) and Family-School Partnership (FSP) Intervention** - multicomponent, universal first-grade interventions to reduce later onset of violence and aggressive behavior and to improve academic performance.
- **Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)** - (Greenberg and Kusché 1998). comprehensive program for promoting emotional health & social competencies & reducing aggression & behavior problems in elementary school children.
- **Skills, Opportunity, And Recognition [SOAR]** - universal school-based intervention for grades one through six seeks to reduce childhood risks for delinquency and drug abuse by enhancing protective factors.
- **Guiding Good Choices (GGC)** - This curriculum was first researched as part of the Seattle Social Development Project at the University of Washington to educate parents on how to reduce risk factors and strengthen bonding in their families.
- **Lions-Quest Skills for Adolescence (SFA)** - universal, life skills education program in use in schools nationwide

Examples of Research Based Prevention Programs (cont'd)

- **Life Skills Training (LST) Program** - designed to address a wide range of risk and protective factors by teaching general personal and social skills, along with drug resistance skills and normative education.
- **Project ALERT** - This drug prevention curriculum is a 2-year, universal program for middle school students that reduces the onset and regular use of substances among youth. The 14-lesson program is designed to prevent drug
- **Project STAR** - comprehensive drug abuse prevention community program with components for schools, parents, community organizations, and health policymakers
- **The Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14** - This program offers seven sessions, each attended by youth and their parents.
- **Early Risers "Skills for Success" Risk Prevention Program** - selective, multicomponent, preventive intervention for children at heightened risk for early onset of serious conduct problems, including licit and illicit drug use. The program's focus is on elementary school children with early aggressive behavior.
- **Brain Power! The NIDA Junior Scientist Program**

Rx Use Prevention Lesson Plans for Teachers

- **Prescriptions for Disaster? *Creating Public Service Campaigns About Prescription Drug Abuse Among Teens***
<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20051227tuesday.html>
- **Medicines in My Home**
<http://www.fda.gov/medsinmyhome/teacher-resources>
- **Prescription for Trouble**
<http://school.discovereducation.com/lessonplans/programs/prescriptionForTrouble/>
- **Mind Over Matter**
www.drugabuse.gov/MOM/MOMindex.html

Summary: What Teachers Can Do To Help

- Be Aware
- Be Observant
- Be Curious
- Be Informed
- KNOW YOUR STUDENTS!
- HAVE A PLAN!

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