



## WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

**Misuse**— any intentional use of a medication with intoxicating properties outside of a physician’s prescription for a bona fide medical condition.<sup>1</sup>

- Four out of the top 5 drugs abused by 12th graders are prescription or non-prescription medications.<sup>2</sup>
- Every day, approximately 2,500 young people between the ages of 12-17 abuse a pain killer for the first time.<sup>2</sup>
- 40% of the teens surveyed believe the abuse of prescription and over-the-counter medications is safer than illegal drugs
- 1 in 5 teens has abused prescription drugs.<sup>3</sup>
- 1 in 3 teens say there is “nothing wrong” with using prescription drugs “every once in a while.”<sup>3</sup>



## WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES?

Using any prescription drug without a physician’s authorization for you is dangerous.

### Abusing medications can cause:<sup>3</sup>

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



## WHERE DO THEY GET THEM?

- Friends and family are the most common source of free prescription drugs misused by youth. Youth steal, buy or ask for them.<sup>1</sup>
- The second most common source for obtaining stimulants, tranquilizers, and sedatives was purchasing from a friend/relative, drug dealer, stranger or the internet.



## WHY DO TEENS USE?

### Teens turn to prescription drugs:<sup>3,4</sup>

- To manage their daily lives, deal with pressure and school-related stress—not to get high.
- To escape
- For thrill seeking
- Because of lack of self-esteem
- To be cool

### Teens also turn to prescription drugs because:<sup>3</sup>

- They are easy to get and free.
- They are easier to hide.
- Parents are less likely to be angry.



## THE NORM

- Everyone’s **NOT** doing it! 4 out of 5 teens have never misused prescription drugs.

Parents, The Anti-Drug  
[www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com)

NIDA for Teens  
<http://teens.drugabuse.gov/parents/>

Time to Talk  
<http://www.timetotalk.org>



## WHAT DO I LOOK FOR? <sup>1</sup>

- Sudden changes in mood
- Extreme changes in friends or hangout locations
- Forgetfulness or clumsiness
- Lying or being deceitful
- Losing interest in personal appearance
- Changes in appetite
- Unusually poor performance in school
- Borrowing money or having extra cash
- Acting especially angry or abusive



## HOW CAN I HELP?

- I will dispose of unused prescription drugs.
- I will store my prescription drugs in a secured place, unavailable to my children.
- I will share what I have learned with my friends and family.
- I will talk to my child about how he/she is managing daily stress.– Teens who consistently learn about the risks of prescription drugs at home are half as likely to try or use these and other drugs.



<sup>1</sup> National Survey on Drug Use and Health  
<sup>2</sup> Monitoring the Future  
<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services–  
 Presenter's Guide "Not Worth the Risk"  
<sup>4</sup> 2007 Patnership Attitude Tracking Survey



## PRESCRIPTION DRUG MISUSE/ABUSE AND YOUR TEEN

