

# WHEN IT COMES TO TEEN PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE, PARENTS NEED EDUCATION AS WELL.

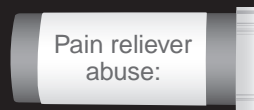
You care about your students. And you probably know them as well as anyone. That's why you should be aware that while teen drug use is down overall, one category is actually on the rise — the abuse of prescription drugs. In fact, there are more new abusers (12 and older) of prescription drugs — such as pain relievers, depressants, and stimulants — than there are of marijuana.<sup>1</sup> Between 1995 and 2005, the number of substance abuse treatment admissions for prescription pain relievers increased by more than 300%.<sup>2</sup> **The bottom line is clear: Abusing prescription drugs can have serious consequences and ruin promising lives.**

Most students use prescription drugs appropriately — to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, and physical pain. There is, however, a growing trend of students using and sharing these drugs to get high, often in combination with other drugs or alcohol. Seventy percent of persons aged 12 and older who abuse pain relievers say they get them from a friend or relative.<sup>3</sup> Obtaining these drugs can be as easy as opening the family medicine cabinet, a friend's purse, or locker. And since there is no smoke or smell, prescription drug abuse can be hard to detect.

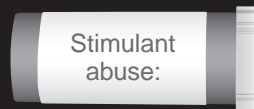
This problem can be prevented. And as a school professional, you play an important role. Learn to recognize the signs and symptoms of prescription drug abuse, and encourage parents, grandparents, and other adults to:

- Safeguard all drugs in their homes. Monitor quantities and control access.
- Set clear rules for teens about all drug use, including not sharing medicine and always following the medical provider's advice and dosages.
- Be a good role model by following these same rules with their own medicines.
- Properly conceal and dispose of old or unused medicines in the trash.
- Ask friends and family to safeguard their prescription drugs as well.

## Watch for **Signs & Symptoms** of prescription drug abuse in your school:



Constricted pupils, nausea and vomiting, and respiratory depression.



Anxiety and delusions, flushed skin, and chest pain with heart palpitations.



Slurred speech, dizziness, and respiratory depression.

For more information on prescription drug disposal guidelines, as well as the risks, signs, and symptoms of teen prescription drug abuse, visit [www.TheAntiDrug.com](http://www.TheAntiDrug.com), or call 1-800-788-2800.

Signed,

**American Academy of Pediatrics**  
**American Association of School Administrators**  
**American Medical Association**  
**American Pharmacists Association**  
**American School Counselor Association**  
**American School Health Association**

**Lions Clubs International**  
**National Association of School Nurses**  
**National Association of Secondary School Principals**  
**National Education Association**  
**Partnership for a Drug-Free America**  
**PTA**

<sup>1</sup> SAMHSA, 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (September 2007).

<sup>2</sup> Treatment Episode Data Set, SAMHSA, 1995-2005.

<sup>3</sup> SAMHSA, 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (September 2007).