

PARENTS: THE ANTI-DRUG

8 ways to prevent prescription and over-the-counter medication abuse among teens:

#1 Educate yourself and your teen about the risks. Prescription drugs can be just as dangerous and addictive as “street drugs”, and can be lethal.

#2 Keep track of quantities. Take note of how many pills are in a bottle. If you find you have to refill medication more often than recommended, there could be a real problem.

#3 Talk to friends, relatives and school administration. Make sure your friends and relatives know about the risks of prescription and OTC drug abuse, and encourage them to keep an eye on their medicine cabinet.

#4 Follow directions carefully. Make sure you and your teen use Rx drugs only as prescribed by a medical doctor and take only the recommended dosages as indicated for both Rx and OTC medications.

#5 Discard old or unused medications. Do not flush medications down the drain or toilet as they may taint the water supply. It is best to mix the medications with an undesirable substance (like used coffee grounds or kitty litter) and put the mixture in an impermeable, non-descript container and throw away. Also, remove any personal information from the prescription bottles before you throw them away.

#6 Monitor your teen’s time online. Check the browser history to ensure that your teen has not visited sites where prescription drugs are able to be purchased.

#7 Be observant. If you find your teen is quickly going through cough syrup, or you find empty bottles or pill packages, talk with your child and determine if there is a problem.

#8 Find other ways to relieve stress and have fun. Many teens report that they abuse Rx and OTC drugs due to boredom or family stress. Help your teen find other ways to relieve pressures.