



Talk Early And Often About Alcohol, Tobacco
And Other Drugs. Even When It Gets Tough

Know! To Talk About Prescription Drug Abuse

The number of preteens and teens abusing prescription medications has skyrocketed. Every day, about 2,500 youth are trying their first painkiller (for a high).

As parents, we wonder what goes through the minds of our children when they consider taking that first pill? According to youth themselves, here is what some of them report thinking:

- *I have heard so much hype over these pain meds. I just want to try it once. It's not a big deal.*
- *I know it's not "ok" to use drugs, but I want to be part of the "group," and at least it's a medicine prescribed by a doctor, which is better than an illegal drug off the street.*
- *This medicine helped my friend's mom with her back pain, so there is nothing wrong with borrowing a few pills to help with my ankle injury.*
- *If a small dose of my prescription helped me feel good, a little more will make me feel even better.*
- *If my grandma can take this prescribed drug, it's certainly not going to hurt me.*

Misconceptions, lack of education and the stereotypical teenage "invincibility syndrome" all play a role in the number of young people abusing prescription drugs for the first time.

For parents, a critical first step in prevention is to recognize your child's risk and to sit down with him/her for an open discussion about the dangers of prescription drugs. Young people need to know that regardless of how one rationalizes his/her particular situation, prescription drug abuse is a big deal, and never an option.

Keep in mind, this is not a one-time conversation, but a topic that needs to be addressed time and again. Know! will continue to provide information to keep this conversation going. But to get started, we suggest you first cover the importance of the **Three R's of Prescription Drugs**:

Parents, we encourage you to elaborate on these three bullet-points:

RESPECT the power of medicine and use it properly.

RECOGNIZE that risks are always present when taking medications and know that those risks increase with misuse and abuse.

RESPONSIBILITY must be taken to learn about proper use of a prescribed medication. And, take responsibility for seeking help at the first sign of a problem (for yourself or a friend).

For helpful resources and further information on combating the prescription drug abuse epidemic visit [The Generation Rx Initiative](#).

Talking regularly with kids reduces their risk of using alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Know! urges you to encourage other parents to join Know! by taking the Parent and Caregiver Pledge. For more information log on to www.HelpThemKnow.com

Know! is a program of:



Drug-Free Action Alliance
Lifetime Prevention
Lifetime Wellness

6155 Huntley Road, Suite H
Columbus, Ohio 43229

With funding support from:



United Way
of Central Ohio

Sources: [NCPIE Coalition - Educate Before You medicate: Talking to Your Kids About Prescription Drug Abuse](#), [Cardinal Health Foundation/OSU College of Pharmacy: Generation Rx Initiative](#).