

Let's help Maryland put a **STOP**
to heroin use and prescription drug abuse.



HEROIN AND OPIOID AWARENESS & PREVENTION TOOLKIT



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D., State Superintendent of Schools
Andrew Smarick, President, Maryland State Board of Education
Larry Hogan, Governor

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“Virtually every 3rd grader can tell you that cigarettes are bad for you, but most don’t know that taking someone else’s prescription drugs is harmful.”

–Maryland Lt. Governor
Boyd K. Rutherford



START THE CONVERSATION EARLY.

Teach the dangers of sharing prescription drugs and monitor childrens’ medicine.

A Message from the State Superintendent

Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.,
State Superintendent of Maryland Schools

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Maryland is grappling with a disturbing and devastating rise in heroin and opioid abuse that directly affects the lives of thousands of men, women, teens and children in our communities. Governor Hogan's Administration has recognized the urgent need for all of us to come together across our state to tackle this emergency and develop comprehensive recommendations we can act on quickly.

Education must play a vital role in this important effort. The Maryland State Department of Education, working closely with the Office of Lt. Governor Boyd K. Rutherford, and partners at the Departments of Health and Commerce, among others, has launched a multi-faceted prevention and awareness campaign to reach every public school, and virtually every student in middle and high school.

We are currently implementing a number of initiatives and recommendations to address the problems highlighted in both the Governor's Interim and Final Task Force recommendations, including, but not limited to:

Incorporate as early and broadly as possible, heroin and opioid prevention information into school health curricula;

Infuse heroin and opioid prevention information into additional academic disciplines;

Integrate heroin and opioid addiction prevention projects into our service-learning modules;

Develop a student-based heroin and opioid prevention campaign; and

Produce a video public service announcement campaign.

This toolkit is designed to share a wealth of resources and information to support and inform the work taking place in our schools to execute these recommendations– and to provide access to information that students, teachers, and parents can use.

Sincerely,



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.,
State Superintendent of School



Get the facts about Opioids.

Learn what Opioids are and how they can be abused.

What are opioids?

Opioids are a class of drugs that include the illegal drug **heroin, fentanyl** (a synthetic opioid pain killer), and **prescription pain relievers** available legally by prescription: oxycodone (OxyContin®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®), codeine, and morphine.

Prescription opioids (pain killers) can be prescribed by doctors to treat moderate to severe pain, but can also have serious risks and side effects. When misused—taken in a different way, in a larger quantity than prescribed, or taken without a doctor's prescription— a user can become addicted.

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid pain reliever. It is many times more powerful than other opioids and is approved for treating severe pain, typically advanced cancer pain. Illegally made and distributed fentanyl has been on the rise in several states.

CDC Opioid Basics (2017).

FACT:

72%

Deaths from fentanyl & other synthetic opioids, rose a staggering 72% in just one year, from 2014 to 2015.

CDC Opioid Basics (2017).

What is prescription drug abuse?

There are several ways legally prescribed opioid drugs can be abused...

- 1 Taking prescription painkillers in a way that was not prescribed, such as taking too many pills at one time, combining pills with alcohol or other drugs, or crushing pills into powder to snort or inject them.
- 2 Taking someone else's prescription painkiller, even if you're doing so for the medication's intended purpose, to ease pain.
- 3 Taking prescription pain killers for the sole purpose of feeling good or getting high.



Rx

Repeated prescription opioid abuse can lead to addiction and even death.

Making the connection—How does prescription drug abuse lead to heroin use?

Abuse of prescription pain medicine can start several ways. Some start abusing it at parties or with friends socially to get high or fit in. Others start taking prescription medicine when prescribed by a doctor for legitimate purposes, such as a sport injury or dental procedure. In both cases, use of prescription medication (opioids) can turn to dependence, abuse, addiction and then heroin use.

Someone that starts abusing opioids and develops an addiction often turns to heroin when they can not attain prescription medicine. A family member might start locking up their medicine or a doctor might refuse prescribing the prescription. From fear of withdrawal, an opioid abuser will resort to the less expensive option of heroin.

Nearly half of young people who inject heroin surveyed in three recent studies reported abusing prescription opioids before starting to use heroin. Some individuals reported switching to heroin because it is cheaper and easier to obtain than prescription opioids.

NIDA Drugs of Abuse Opioid Overview (2017). www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/opioids

FACT:

1 in 4



Teens reports having abused or misused an Rx drug at least once in their lifetime.

NIDA For Teens Prescription Drug Facts (2017).

What is Naloxone?

Naloxone is a medication approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to prevent overdose by opioids such as heroin, morphine, and oxycodone. It blocks opioid receptor sites, reversing the toxic effects of the overdose. Naloxone (NARCAN®) can be given by intranasal spray, intramuscular (into the muscle), subcutaneous (under the skin), or intravenous injection.

All public schools in Maryland have naloxone available in their campuses for this school year. The new requirement is the result of legislation that was passed in Annapolis earlier this year.

DID YOU KNOW?

Opioid addiction is a disease.

Addiction, also called option use disorder, is a serious medical condition. It is a chronic, relapsing brain disease with symptoms that include compulsive seeking and use of the drug, despite harmful consequences.

It is considered a brain disease because drugs change the brain; they change its structure and how it works. These brain changes can be long lasting and can lead to many harmful, often self-destructive, behaviors.

While the initial decision to use drugs is mostly voluntary, addiction can take over and impair a person's ability to use self-control.

NIDA Drugs of Abuse Opioid Overview (2017). www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/opioids

A National Epidemic.

Opioid abuse now has the nation's attention.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), drug overdose deaths and opioid-involved deaths continue to increase in the United States. More than six out of ten overdose deaths involve an opioid. The number of overdose deaths involving opioids (including prescription opioids and heroin) has quadrupled since 1999. From 2000 to 2015 more than half a million people died from drug overdoses.

How did we get here?

In the late 1990s, pharmaceutical companies reassured the medical community that patients would not become addicted to prescription opioid pain relievers, and healthcare providers began to prescribe them at greater rates. This subsequently led to widespread diversion and misuse of these medications before it became clear that these medications could indeed be highly addictive; opioid overdose rates began to increase. In 2015, more than 33,000 Americans died as a result of an opioid overdose, including prescription opioids, heroin, and illicitly manufactured fentanyl.

Because of these alarming numbers- the nation has refocused their attention to educating youths at earlier ages to inform and educate on the dangers of opioid abuse. The hope is to reach children early before being exposed to opioid abuse and supply them with the coping skills and knowledge that they utilize for the future.

NIDA Drugs of Abuse Opioid Overview. (2017) www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/opioids

FACT:

90+

Americans die after overdosing on opioids every day.

CDC Opioid Basics (2017).

PREVENTION

Through extensive research, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) has identified 16 principles for parents, educators, and community leaders to use to help guide their thinking planning, selection, and delivery of drug abuse prevention programs at the community and school level. In addition, research indicates that early intervention can prevent many adolescent risk behaviors.

▶ **Learn more about the 16 prevention principles**

6 EYE OPENING NATIONAL OPIOID STATISTICS



- 1** | From 2000 to 2015 more than half a million people died from drug overdoses.¹
- 2** | Deaths from prescription opioids—drugs like oxycodone, hydrocodone, and methadone—have more than quadrupled since 1999.¹
- 3** | The majority of drug overdose deaths (more than six out of ten) involve an opioid.¹
- 4** | From 1999 to 2015, more than 183,000 people have died in the U.S. from overdoses related to prescription opioids.²
- 5** | Each day, more than 1,000 people are treated in emergency departments for not using prescription opioid as directed.³
- 6** | Among new heroin users, approximately three out of four report having abused prescription opioids prior to using heroin.⁴

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2017). *Understanding the epidemic*. <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/epidemic/index.html>

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2017). *Prescription opioid overdose data*. www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/overdose.html

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2017). *Fentanyl: The next wave of the opioid crisis*. www.cdc.gov/washington/testimony/2017/t20170321.html

⁴ National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2015). *Prescription opioids and heroin*.

DID YOU KNOW?

The opioid epidemic has reached adolescents (12 to 17 years old).

In 2015, 276,000 adolescents were current nonmedical users of pain reliever, with 122,000 having an addiction to prescription pain relievers.

In 2015, an estimated 21,000 adolescents had used heroin in the past year, and an estimated 5,000 were current heroin users.

Most adolescents who misuse prescription pain relievers are first given them for free by a friend or relative.

ASAM - American Society of Addiction Medicine. (2016).

<https://www.asam.org/docs/default-source/advocacy/opioid-addiction-disease-facts-figures.pdf>

Maryland's statistics speak volumes.

Did you know Maryland is quickly becoming the state with the highest rate of prescription abusers?

Maryland's Response

Legislation to battle heroin and opioid overdoses in Maryland with education, prevention, treatment and law enforcement was signed into law in May 2017 by Gov. Larry Hogan. Public schools are tweaking drug-education lessons and colleges are preparing sessions for incoming students to comply with the **Start Talking Maryland Act**, which became a law July 1. The act, requires public schools to offer drug education that includes the dangers of heroin and other opioids starting as early as third grade. It also requires public schools to stock the overdose-reversal drug naloxone, have staff who are trained to use it and to report naloxone uses to the state.

In addition, **The Start Talking Maryland Act** increases school and community-based education and awareness efforts to equip Maryland youth with the knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors to lead a drug-free life.

FACT:

89%
of all intoxication
deaths that
occurred in
Maryland in 2016
were opioid
related.

*Maryland Department of
Health- Drug and Alcohol
Related Intoxication Deaths in
Maryland (2016).*



Before it's too late.

Before It's Too Late

Before It's Too Late is the statewide effort to bring awareness to the rapid escalation of the heroin, opioid, and fentanyl crisis in Maryland—and to mobilize all available resources for effective prevention, treatment, and recovery before it's too late.

BeforeItsTooLateMD.org

Providing Safe Disposal Sites

Maryland has worked on providing safe disposal sites that allow the secure disposal of prescription drugs. These sites provide a place for parents, family members or friends to dispose of prescription medicine. Securely disposing your medicine keeps dangerous prescriptions out of the hands of adolescents and others.

Click on the links below to view a list of Prescription Drop Off Collection Sites by Region.

- **CENTRAL** - Drop-Off Collection Sites
- **SOUTHERN** - Drop-Off Collection Sites
- **EASTERN** - Drop-Off Collection Sites
- **WESTERN** - Drop-Off Collection Sites

MARYLAND'S 2016 NUMBERS

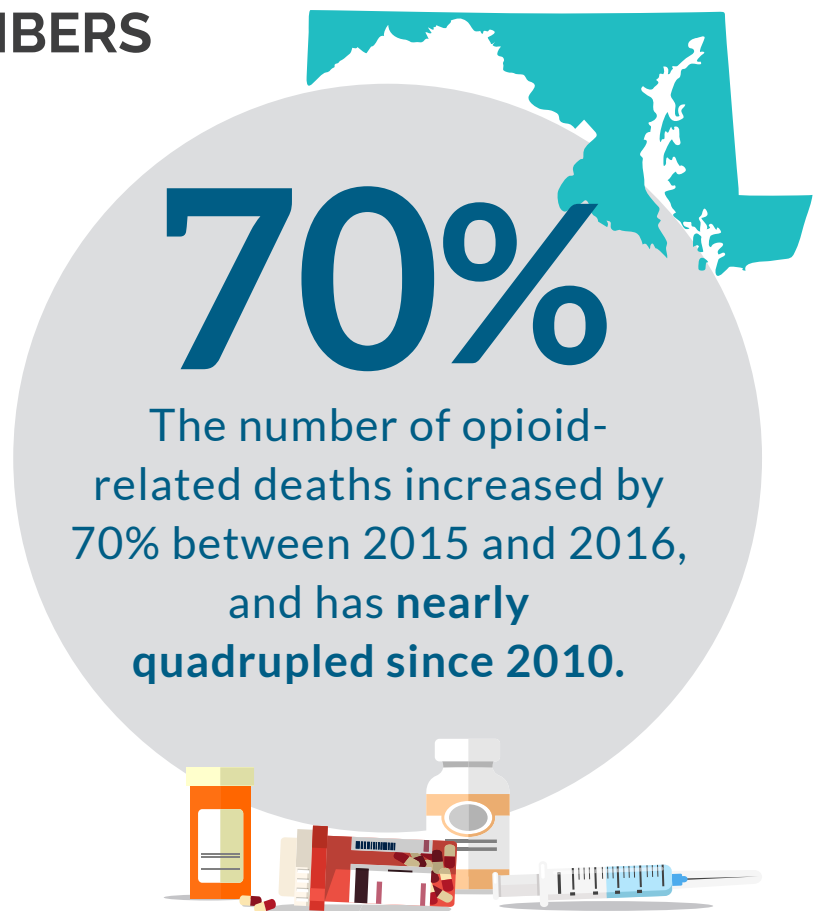
We must raise awareness of the heroin and opioid epidemic throughout Maryland schools -- educators, parents, and students.



Big increases in the number of heroin and fentanyl-related deaths were largely responsible for the overall rise in opioid-related deaths. Between 2015 and 2016 the number of heroin-related deaths increased by 62% (from 748 to 1212), and the number of fentanyl-related deaths more than tripled (from 340 to 1119).

There was a total of 1212 heroin related deaths in Maryland in 2016.

In 2013 there was 729 Opioid related deaths. In 2016 that number rose to 1856.



63% percent of fentanyl-related deaths in 2016 occurred in combination with heroin, 26% in combination with alcohol, and 23% in combination with cocaine.

The number of heroin-related deaths in Maryland increased five-fold between 2010 and 2016. Heroin deaths have increased among all age groups, Whites and African Americans, men and women, and in all regions of the State.

Fentanyl-related deaths have increased substantially among all age groups, among Whites and African Americans, among both men and women, and in all regions of the State.

Educator Resources

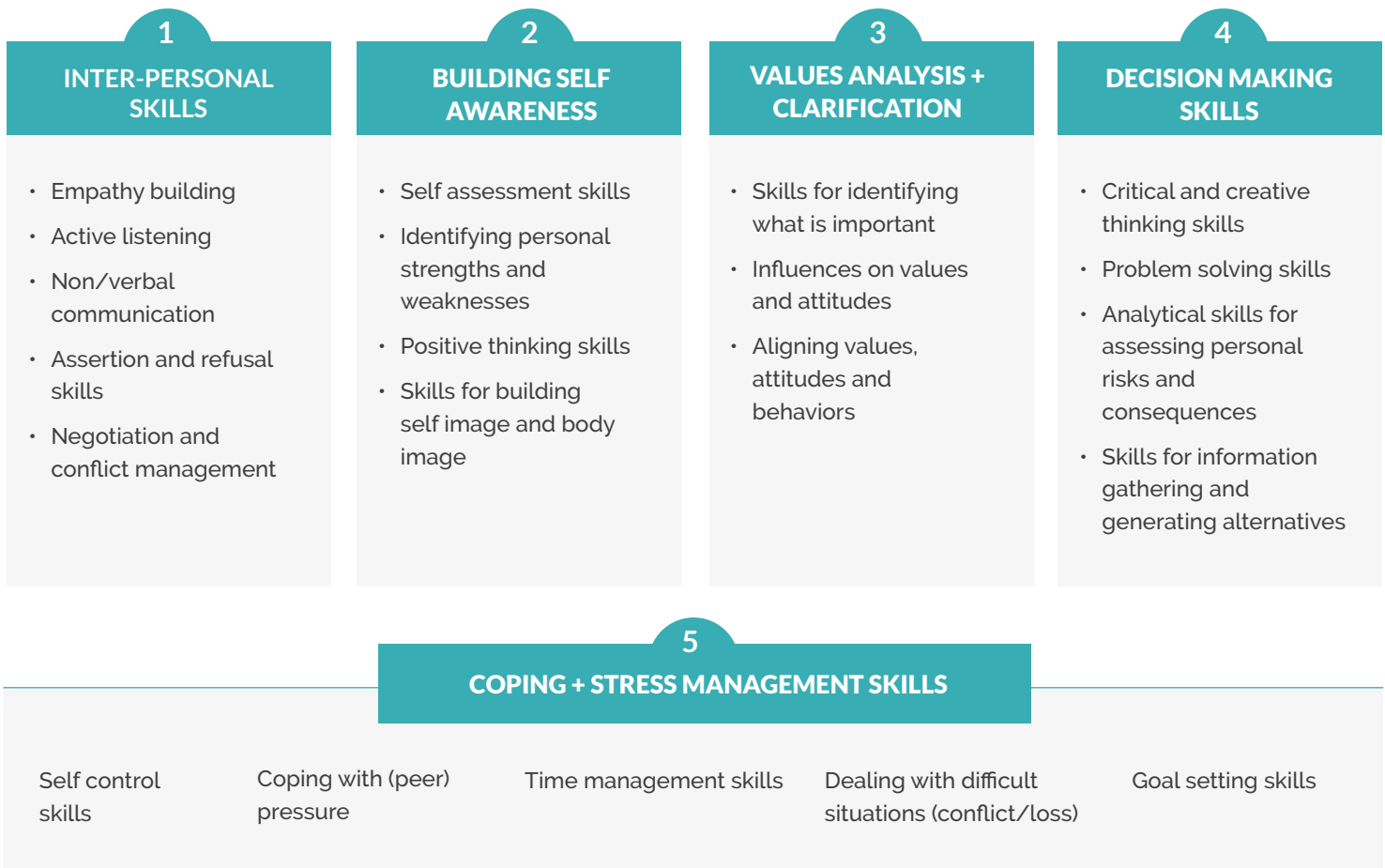
Learn what Maryland schools and educators are doing to help fight opioid addiction.

Educator tools for drug prevention education.

Maryland educators know that teaching the whole child is important in drug prevention education. In addition to specific drug prevention education content beginning in Kindergarten, Maryland educators teach students the skills needed to **appropriately analyze influences, access valid information, communicate effectively, make healthy decisions, set-goals that promote a positive quality of life, practice health enhancing behaviors, and advocate for self and others across all grade bands.**

From a prevention standpoint, it is essential that our youth develop the protective factors needed to lead a drug-free life. The skills below can be infused into a variety of content areas, disciplines, and across grade bands.

CROSS-CURRICULAR SKILL DEVELOPMENT



UNICEF. (2003). Drug use prevention training manual. www.unicef.org/lifeskills/files/DrugUsePreventionTrainingManual.pdf

Programs based in best practices:

LIFE-SKILLS TRAINING

Separate curricula have been developed for elementary school students (grades three to six), middle or junior high students (grades 6 to 8, or grades 7 to 9), and high school students (grades 9 or 10).

www.lifeskillstraining.com

SMART MOVES, SMART CHOICES

Smart Moves, Smart Choices is a national awareness program designed to inform parents, teens and educators about the risks of teen prescription drug abuse and misuse, and to empower them to address this serious problem.

www.smartmovesmartchoices.org

GENERATION RX

Provides educational curricula to people of all ages about the potential dangers of misusing prescription medications.

www.generationrx.org

OPERATION PREVENTION

Operation Prevention is an initiative brought to you by the DEA and Discovery Education to educate elementary, middle and high school students about the true impacts of prescription opioid misuse and heroin use.

www.operationprevention.com

PROJECT SUCCESS

Project SUCCESS motivates and inspires young people to dream about their futures, helps them take steps to get there, and gives them the tools they need to achieve their goals. Activities begin in 6th grade and serve students continuously through 12th grade. The program helps students to build life-skills, supportive relationships, grit, confidence, motivation, and graduate with plans for their futures.

www.curriculum.projectsucces.org

TOOL TIP

HECAT: Module Alcohol and Other Drugs Prevention curriculum

This module contains the tools to analyze and score curricula that are intended to promote an alcohol and other drug-free lifestyle.

[LEARN MORE >](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

More than
6 million
Americans age 12 or older have used a prescription drug nonmedically in the past month.

According to data from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Survey on Drug Use and Health, between 6 and 7 million Americans, age 12 and older, have misused a prescription painkiller (e.g., OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin), sedative (e.g., Valium, Xanax) or stimulant (e.g., Ritalin, Adderall) in the past month. Approximately 5,500 people do so for the first time every day.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Results from the 2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings, NSDUH Series H-48, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 14-4863.

Elementary Resources

BY THE END OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

Identify appropriate and safe practices for using prescription and over the counter drugs.

Best practices for young children in drug prevention education.

Prevention programs for elementary school children should target improving academic and social-emotional learning to address risk factors for drug abuse, such as early aggression, academic failure, and school dropout. Education should focus on helping students to develop the skills needed for self-control, emotional awareness, and communication, social problem-solving, academic support, and identifying trusted adults when seeking help. It is important to remember that students in elementary school generally do not have a great deal of control over their environment and that they may be living in a household where parents/caretakers have a substance abuse disorder.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

KNOWLEDGE STUDENTS LEARN:	ATTITUDES STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE:	SKILLS STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of self-confidence and self esteem • Rules and duties in families • Sharing and caring for family and friends • People who can help them when they have questions or concerns • Physical and emotional differences and ways of accepting these differences • Recognition of medicines and awareness that rules apply to medicines • Safety rules for medicines and dangers of taking incorrect dose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuing one's body and recognizing their uniqueness • Positive attitudes towards self and confidence in their ability to deal with varied situations and other people • Healthy attitudes towards medicines, health professionals and hospitals • Healthy attitudes towards the use of alcohol and tobacco • Empathy towards people living with addiction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate basic listening skills and work effectively in small groups • Communicate with friends and others and deliver clear messages • Express feelings openly and honestly when sick or hurt • Make choices relating to toys, food, sleep, play, friends and drugs • Set goals to keep themselves safe and drug free • Follow simple safety instructions and know when and how to get help from adults

UNICEF. (2003). Drug use prevention training manual. www.unicef.org/lifeskills/files/DrugUsePreventionTrainingManual.pdf

Elementary resource links for educators:

SMART MOVES, SMART CHOICES TOOL KIT

Elementary schools and community organizations can begin educating children (grades K-5) and their parents about safe and proper use of over-the-counter and prescription medication.

www.smartmovesmartchoices.org/start-smart

OVER-THE-COUNTER(OTC) MEDICINE SAFETY: SCHOLASTIC LESSON PLANS

OTC Medicine Safety was created by the American Association of Poison Control Centers and Scholastic for use by teachers and students, as well as families and healthcare professionals. Now in its fifth year of use, the program has been shown to be effective in increasing students' knowledge about responsible OTC medicine use and storage.

www.scholastic.com/otc-med-safety/teachers

OPERATION PREVENTION: ELEMENTARY EDUCATOR GUIDE

These lessons, students will investigate what medicine is and when, how, and why we take it. Through a series of activities, students will discover how medication enters our bodies to control illnesses that won't go away, helps prevent us from getting sick, and makes us feel better when we are sick. They will use this information to help explain the importance of responsibly consuming medications that are sold over-the-counter (OTC) and those prescribed by a doctor.

[View Educator guide](#)

TEACHER'S GUIDE: DRUGS (PREK- GRADE 2)

Teachers guide for Pre K - 2 that includes standards, related links, discussion questions, activities for students and reproducible materials.

www.classroom.kidshealth.org/prekto2/problems/drugs/drugs.pdf

FACT:

From 1997 to 2012, a total of **13,052** hospitalizations for prescription opioid poisonings were identified in children younger than 6 years. In nearly all these poisonings, the child was exposed to a prescription intended for an adult in the household.

Journal of American Medical Associations – JAMA Pediatrics (2016).

Helpful tools

- [Drug Facts Poster - Understanding the label](#) | [View PDF](#)
- [Digital Storybook - The Perfect Project](#) | [View PDF](#)
- [K - 2 Printable Workbook](#) | [View PDF](#)
- [3 - 5 Printable Workbook](#) | [View PDF](#)

Middle School Resources

BY THE END OF MIDDLE SCHOOL, STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

Understand appropriate safe practices for using medicines safely and the consequences of the use and abuse of opioids.

Pre-adolescence is a critical time for students to develop the protective factors needed to live a drug-free life.

Research has identified that a key risk period for drug abuse is when children advance from elementary school to middle school. This is where they will experience new academic and social situations, such as learning to get along with a wider group of peers. It is also during early adolescence that children are likely to encounter drugs for the first time and experience social pressures to experiment and/or use drugs. To build upon the protective knowledge, attitudes, and skills (KAS) learned in elementary school, drug prevention education programs should create learning experiences that promote the following KAS in curricular materials. **For more information, visit NIDA.**

PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

KNOWLEDGE STUDENTS LEARN:	ATTITUDES STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE:	SKILLS STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School rules relating to medicines, alcohol, tobacco, solvents and illegal drugs • Laws relating to the use of legal and illegal drugs • People who can help them when they are sick or have questions and concerns • Recognition of a variety of feelings and changes in relationships • Short term effects of legal drugs e.g. smoking and alcohol use and/or other locally available substances • Physical nature of changes during puberty, myths and personal hygiene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance of responsibility for their actions and safety • Respect for the opinions and lives of others • Positive attitudes towards people living with addiction • Positive attitudes towards personal hygiene and health • Acceptance of themselves and change • Accepting attitudes and beliefs about drugs and people who use them • Understanding media and advertising presentations of alcohol, tobacco and other legal drugs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate effectively with a wide range of people • Identify problem or risk situations and make decision based on accurate information • Cope with peer influences, assert their ideas and convey their decisions • Use decision making and assertiveness in situations relating to drug use • Adjust to changes in their lives • Maintain friendships • Resist dares and other peer pressure

UNICEF. (2003). Drug use prevention training manual. www.unicef.org/lifeskills/files/DrugUsePreventionTrainingManual.pdf

Middle School resource links for educators:

RX FOR UNDERSTANDING: BE SMART ABOUT PRESCRIPTION DRUGS (GRADES 5-8)

Easy to use, standards-based, cross-curricular lesson plans for grades 5-8. The lessons in this guide represent a cross-curricular approach to teaching with a concentrated emphasis on national education standards, including the National Health Education Standards and the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics.

[Download the lesson plan](#)

KIDS HEALTH: DRUG EDUCATION • HEALTH PROBLEMS SERIES (GRADES 6-8)

Despite the fact that they're illegal and dangerous, drugs are still accessible to kids and teens. These activities will help your students learn what drugs do to the body and mind, and enable them to counter peer pressure to take drugs.

www.classroom.kidshealth.org/6to8/problems/drugs/drugs.pdf

HEADS UP SCHOLASTIC: OPIOIDS AND THE OVERDOSE EPIDEMIC

Lesson plans, related articles, classroom materials and critical thinking questions for drug education with a focus on opioid overdose.

www.headsup.scholastic.com/teachers/opioid-overdose-epidemic

Know the signs of drug use in pre-adolescent children.



Where to get help:

SAMHSA's National Helpline

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

A confidential, free, 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year, information service, in English and Spanish,

- › Negative changes in grades
- › Changes in general behavior, including unusual tiredness, sleeping & eating habits
- › Skipping classes or school
- › Dropping longtime friends
- › Loss of interest in usual activities
- › Changes in appearance
- › Secretive behavior, laughing for no reason

Helpful tools

- [Scholastic Work Sheet Printable](#) | [View PDF](#)
- [Student Article](#) | [View PDF](#)
- [Peer Pressure](#) | [Visit website](#)

High School Resources

BY THE END OF HIGH SCHOOL, STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

Understand the physical, psychological, social, and legal consequences of opioids, including fentanyl and the factors that influence a person's use of opioids.

In health education class, students demonstrate strategies for refusing opioids from peers and healthcare professionals while learning about addiction. Health educators teach students the **skills needed to recognize the signs and symptoms of drug misuse, dependence, addictive behaviors and how to apply appropriate strategies to intervene and help a friend or family member.**

Drug prevention education programs intended for high school students should build upon the protective factors taught in previous grades and use a social norms approach that places emphasis on combining drug information with the social and resistance skills needed to be drug-free. In addition, school personnel can connect students to services such as school counseling and recovery assistance.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

KNOWLEDGE STUDENTS LEARN:	ATTITUDES STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE:	SKILLS STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressures that can influence health behavior • Physical characteristics of the body and benefits of exercise • Non drug taking as an attractive lifestyle • Abstinence, moderation and alternatives to drug use • Definition of drugs, misuse and drug abuse • Drugs and the law • Short and long term effects of the most common legal and illegal substances, related diseases, such as HIV and problems in their country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to use school and community resources for information about drugs • Personal commitment to not use drugs and confidence in personal ability to resist • Understanding of the environment, social, and cultural influences on young people's drug use • Value in their own health and the health of their family, now and in the future • Acceptance of responsibility in relation to future roles • Empathy for people with disability or illness, especially addiction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use relationship skills and communicate with parents and peers • Give and get care in a variety of situations for health related issues • Set short and long term goals • Manage their own conflict, aggression, stress and time • Identify and assess personal risk and practice universal protection • Make decisions and assert themselves and deal with positive and negative peer pressure

UNICEF. (2003). Drug use prevention training manual. www.unicef.org/lifeskills/files/DrugUsePreventionTrainingManual.pdf

High School resource links for educators:

RX FOR UNDERSTANDING: PREVENTING PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE (GRADES 9-12)

The guide contains 10 sequenced lessons geared for grades 9-12. The entire set of lessons is structured to function as a project-based mini-unit. There are lessons that provide direct instruction related to our three key themes: proper use, misuse, and abuse of prescription drugs.

[View RX for Understanding PDF](#)

MY GENERATION RX: TEEN EDUCATION (EDUCATE TEENS ABOUT USING MEDICATIONS SAFELY)

A comprehensive guide that contains information to successfully present all of the teen resources. In addition, we've included a "Tips & Advice" handout for teens. Facilitators may elect to distribute this handout following an educational program or at an informational booth.

www.generationrx.org/take-action/teen

EVERFI: PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM

Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention is an innovative digital course that arms high school students with the knowledge and tools to make healthy, informed decisions when it comes to prescription medications. Through interactive scenarios and self-guided activities, students learn the facts about drugs, how to properly use and dispose of them, and how to step in when faced with a situation involving misuse.

www.everfi.com/k-12/prescription-drug-abuse-prevention

OPERATION PREVENTION: HIGH SCHOOL DIGITAL LESSON GUIDE

In this lesson, students will examine misconceptions and facts about opioids. Through a series of investigations, they then will learn the science behind prescription opioid misuse and heroin use, overdose, and withdrawal. Students will discover that opioid use may start off as a choice, but it can become a chemical dependency. They will apply what they learn to explain the science behind authentic stories of prescription opioid misuse and heroin use.

[View the Educator guide](#)

TOOL TIP

Maryland's Good Samaritan Law

Discuss the Good Samaritan Law, which provides protection from arrest as well as prosecution for certain specific crimes and expands the charges from which people assisting in an emergency overdose situation are immune.

[LEARN MORE >](#)

Know the signs of drug use in adolescent children.

- > Negative changes in grades
- > Changes in general behavior, including sleeping & eating habits
- > Distancing themselves from longtime friends
- > Sleeping during classes
- > Acting out in class or becoming confrontational
- > Loss of interest, withdrawn in the classroom
- > Skipping classes & school

Helpful tools

- [In the Mix: The PBS Talk Show](#) | [View Video](#)
- [How can prescription drugs lead to heroin use?](#) | [View Infographic](#)

Student Resources

There are several resources students can access to learn more about opioid use and abuse and how to seek help for a family or peer.

What to do if another student, friend, and family member is abusing prescription drugs?

There are many ways to help and support your friend, but in the end, it will need to be your friend's decision. Sometimes our friends won't appreciate advice they don't want to hear—especially if they're using drugs—but telling the truth to help someone close to you is part of being a real friend, even when it's hard to do.

When the people we care about and have lots in common with make unhealthy choices, it can be frustrating, confusing, and a little depressing. Still, we should be there for our friends—and also try to be a good role model for them by making healthy choices ourselves.

If you see or hear about someone misusing opioids, talk to a coach, guidance counselor teacher, or other trusted adult.

WHAT TO DO:

Find out if your friend is experimenting with drugs, or if he/she may be addicted.

Neither one is good—but you may need more support if your friend is addicted.

Understand that addiction is a brain disease.

Just like you wouldn't expect someone with cancer to be able to heal herself without a doctor's help, the right treatment, and support from family and friends, you can't expect your friend to heal herself.

Know that it's never easy for anyone to admit that they have a drug problem.

You'll need to be patient—and not give up easily.

Listen, encourage, share, and support.

Sounds easy, right? But it's so hard. We provide further tips and resources in a previous post we wrote titled "How to Help a Friend in Need."

It's tough having a friend with addiction issues. If you need some support, visit: www.alanon.alateen.org

National Institute on Drug Abuse for Teens. (2010). Real teens ask: How can I help my friend? www.teens.drugabuse.gov/blog/post/real-teens-ask-how-can-i-help-my-friend

WHAT TO SAY:

Just telling your friend that you're concerned can be a big help.

Your friend may not want to talk about it, and the effects of drugs on the brain may keep him from "hearing" you or acting on your advice.

Assure your friend you are there for her and that she is not alone.

People with drug problems often have gotten in with the wrong crowd—and they don't want to turn away from these so-called friends for fear of being alone.

Suggest that he speak to a trusted adult who will keep it confidential.

Maybe there's a family friend who could help?

Turn to a professional for immediate help.

If the problem looks to be too big for you to handle alone, or if you're worried your friend may have suicidal thoughts that she could act on.

Use SAMHSA's Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator.

Call 1-800-662-HELP or visit the online site to tap into a support network where you can find immediate and confidential help 24/7.

Resource links for students:

MD CONTACT SITE

Help4MDYouth.org is an initiative of the Maryland Youth Crisis Hotline Network. All centers operate 24-hours a day, 7-days a week, 365 days a year. The Maryland Crisis Hotline Network is providing online crisis chat services Monday-Friday 4pm-9pm.

www.help4mdyouth.org

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DRUG ABUSE FOR TEENS

Get the latest on how drugs affect the brain and body. Featuring videos, games, blog posts and more.

www.teens.drugabuse.gov



Need help
with Opioid
Addiction or
Treatment?

IF YOU, OR A FRIEND, ARE IN CRISIS AND NEED TO SPEAK WITH SOMEONE NOW:

Maryland Crisis Hotline

1-800-422-0009

beforeitstoolate.maryland.gov

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK

They don't just talk about suicide—they cover a lot of issues and will help put you in touch with someone close by.

IF YOU NEED INFORMATION ON TREATMENT AND WHERE YOU CAN FIND IT:

Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator

1-800-662-HELP

www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov

FACT

85%

of Maryland high school students have never taken a prescription drug without a doctor's order.

YRBS survey (2015)

DID YOU KNOW?

Maryland has a Good Samaritan law.

- › [Good Samaritan Law Fact Sheet](#)
- › [Good Samaritan Law Poster](#)

The Maryland Good Samaritan Law, effective October 1, 2015, provides protection from arrest as well as prosecution for certain specific crimes and expands the charges from which people assisting in an emergency overdose situation are immune.

If someone calls 911 in an effort to help during an overdose crisis, or they are experiencing an overdose, their parole and probation status will not be affected, and they will now not be arrested, charged, or prosecuted for: possession of a controlled dangerous substance, possession or use of drug paraphernalia, providing alcohol to minors.

Parent Resources

Learn about teen drug abuse and find out ways to start a conversation about prescriptions drugs and other opioids.

Teen Drug Experimentation

Half of all new drug users are under the age of 18. Experimentation plays the biggest role in teenage drug use. However, experimentation is a fact of life and just because a teen has tried drugs or alcohol doesn't mean they will become an addict. It's more important to understand why some teens are tempted to experiment. Common reasons teens abuse drugs include **curiosity, peer pressure, stress, emotional struggles, and a desire to escape.**

The majority of adults with an addiction first experimented with drugs before they turned 21. The good news is that the rates of teenage drug abuse have been declining. If you think your teen is using drugs, there are teen addiction treatment options available.

Starting the conversation about drug use and abuse.

The best way to get a teen to communicate about their drug use is by asking compassionate and understanding questions. Open, honest conversations are some of the most powerful tools parents can use to connect with— and protect —their kids. But when tackling some of life's tougher topics, especially those about drugs and alcohol, just figuring out what to say can be a challenge.

The following links will help you start the conversation with your child:

- [Medicine Abuse Project - Parent Talk Kit](#)
- [Download Have a Conversation, Not a Confrontation](#)
(Partnership for Drug-Free Kids)
- [Download Talking to Your Kids About Prescription Drug Abuse: Not Worth the Risk for Parents](#) (SAMHSA)

Know the signs of drug use in teens.

- Negative changes in grades
- Changes in general behavior, including unusual tiredness, sleeping & eating habits
- Skipping classes or school, missing curfew
- Dropping longtime friends, not inter
- Loss of interest in usual activities, unusual tiredness
- Changes in appearance, poor hygiene
- Smell of smoke on breath or clothes
- Secretive behavior, laughing for no reason



Mind your meds.

Two-thirds of teens who report abuse of prescription medicine are getting it from friends, family and acquaintances. Make sure the teens in your life don't have access to your medicine. Follow these three steps to find out how to monitor, secure and properly dispose of unused and expired prescription and over-the-counter cough medicine in your home.



STEP 1: MONITOR

Parents are in an influential position to immediately help reduce teen access to prescription medicine because medicine is commonly found in the home. But how aware are you of the quantities that are currently in your home? Think about this: Would you know if some of your pills were missing? From this day forward, make sure you can honestly answer yes.



STEP 2: SECURE

Take prescription medicine out of the medicine cabinet and secure them in a place only you know about. If possible, keep all medicines, both prescription and over-the-counter, in a safe place, such as a locked cabinet your teen cannot access. Spread the word to other households that teens may have access to, and encourage them to secure their prescriptions as well.



STEP 3: DISPOSE

Safely disposing of expired or unused medicine is a critical step in helping to protect your teens, your family and home, and decrease the opportunity for your teens or their friends to abuse your medicine.

- › [Download the Safe Drug Disposal Guide](#)
- › [View Maryland's Prescription Drug Drop Off Sites](#)

If I want to get help for my teen or young adult, where do I start?

- › [American Society of Addiction Medicine](#)
- › [Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist Finder](#)

Asking for help from professionals is the first important step. You can start by bringing your child to a doctor who can screen for signs of drug use and other related health conditions. You can also contact an addiction specialist directly.

There are 3,500 board-certified physicians who specialize in addiction in the United States. The American Society of Addiction Medicine website has a Find a Physician feature on its home page, and the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry has a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist Finder on its website. You and the physician can decide if your teen or young adult should be referred to treatment.

National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2016). What to do if your teen or young adult has a problem with drugs. www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/treatment/what-to-do-if-your-teen-or-young-adult-has-a-problem-with-drugs

Resource links for parents:

FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS: PREVENTING TEEN PRESCRIPTION MEDICINE ABUSE

A fact sheet provided by Partnership for Drug-Free Kids and The Medicine Abuse Project that provides helpful information on risks, help and facts.

[View the fact sheet](#)

PARENT TALK KIT

Conversations are one of the most powerful tools parents can use to connect with — and protect— their kids. But when tackling some of life's tougher topics, especially those about drugs and alcohol, just figuring out what to say can be a challenge. These age-by-age scripts will help you get conversations going.

[View the Parent Talk Kit](#)

DRUGS AND YOUR KIDS

Access the resources the National Institute on Drug Abuse for Parents provide on their site. View prevention, treatment and education resources in addition to videos.

www.teens.drugabuse.gov/parents/drugs-and-your-kids

OPERATION PREVENTION: PARENT TOOLKIT

How can you, as a parent or caregiver, help support your child and stop the deadly cycle of heroin use and opioid pill misuse? This guide has been designed to help you learn more about the epidemic, recognize warning signs, and open up lines of communication with your child and those in your community.

[View the Parent Toolkit](#)

KEEP A CLEAR MIND

Keep A Clear Mind is a parent-child, take-home program in drug education. It has been field-tested and rigorously evaluated with students in grades 4, 5, & 6. Keep A Clear Mind has won the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention's (CSAP) Exemplary Program Award.

www.keepaclearmind.com/keep_a_clear_mind.php

PILL IDENTIFIER

Search by Imprint, Shape or Color. Use the pill finder to identify medications by visual appearance or medicine name.

www.drugs.com/imprints.php

GUIDING GOOD CHOICES®

Guiding Good Choices is a science-based, proven-effective Alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD)-prevention program that gives parents the skills they need to ensure the future well-being of their children.

[Visit website](#)

TOOL TIP:

Advocating for your child with medical doctors

You can take an active role in your child's health care. Start by asking more questions when your child's doctor or dentist prescribes (or wants to prescribe) painkillers. Don't just listen--have a conversation.

Before obtaining the script, take a moment to ask your doctor or dentist these five questions:

- Is my child at risk for addiction?
- Will something else work?
- How long will they be taking them?
- Are you prescribing the lowest possible dose?
- What's the plan to taper them off?

LEARN MORE ABOUT QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR >

Additional Resources

General links:

DISCOVERY SCHOOL: DEADLY HIGHS

www.school.discovery.com/schooladventures/health/deadlyhighs

FREEVIBE.COM: DRUG FACTS

www.freevibe.com/Drug_Facts

KIDSHEALTH: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DRUGS

www.kidshealth.org/kid/grow/drugs_alcohol/know_drugs.html

NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR ALCOHOL AND DRUG INFORMATION: A GUIDE FOR TEENS

www.health.org/govpubs/phd688

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DRUG ABUSE FOR TEENS

www.teens.drugabuse.gov

NEUROSCIENCE FOR KIDS: EXPLORE THE BRAIN AND SPINAL CORD (CLICK ON THE LINK "DRUG EFFECTS")

www.faculty.washington.edu/chudler/introb.html

PARTNERSHIP FOR A DRUG FREE AMERICA: PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION ABUSE

www.www.drugfreeamerica.org/Templates

SCHOLASTIC'S HEAD'S UP: REAL NEWS ABOUT DRUGS AND YOUR BODY

www.scholastic.com/nida/nida/nida8_te_comp.pdf

TEEN CHALLENGE: PRESCRIPTION DRUG INFORMATION

www.teenchallenge.com/drugs/prescriptiondrugs.cfm

TROUBLE IN THE MEDICINE CHEST: RX DRUG ABUSE GROWING

www.ncadi.samhsa.gov/govpubs/prevalert/v6/4.aspx

Drug Facts:

[Commonly Abused Prescription Drugs Chart](#)

[DrugFacts: Prescription and Over-the-Counter Medications](#)

[Prescription Pain Medications: What You Need to Know](#)

[Research Report Series: Misuse of Prescription Drugs](#)

[Research Report Series: Prescription Opioids and Heroin](#)

Statistics and Facts:

[DrugFacts: High School and Youth Trends](#)
NIDA

[Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System \(YRBSS\)](#)
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[Monitoring the Future](#)
Monitoring the Future (University of Michigan)

[National Survey on Drug Use and Health](#)
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



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Andrew Smarick, President, Maryland State Board of Education
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REV 2/22/17