

October 2018 Newsletter



October is National Medicine Abuse Awareness Month

National Drug Take Back Day is October 27th, 2018

The Dangers of OTC & Rx Medication:

- ❖ OTC stands for over-the-counter medication; this along with prescription drugs has become the second most abused category of drugs.
- ❖ Youth are thinking, “These drugs were prescribed by doctors or sold in stores, how can they be that harmful?”
- ❖ Flawed thoughts (like above) are causing youth to obtain these drugs thinking they are a “better alternative” compared to marijuana, heroin, etc.
- ❖ Use of these types of drugs can cause addiction and could be a gateway for more addictive drugs.
- ❖ This category of drugs has easier access than most drugs (making it more harmful) because they can be found in kitchen cabinets, family members/friend’s homes, and local drug stores

The Opioid Epidemic:

- Opioids are medications that relieve pain
- 1 in 4 people who receive prescribed opioids long term struggle with addiction
- 75% of heroin users have reported having abused prescription opioids before using heroin
- In 2015 the amount of opioids prescribed was enough for **every American** to be medicated around the clock for **3 weeks**
- Even at low doses, taking opioids for more than 3 months increases the risk of addiction by 15 times
- Naloxone (also Narcan) is a medication used to rapidly block the effects of opioids
- Free REVIVE! Training for the public is available. Please call Ann Gibson to sign up at 276-632-4037, and to receive a free prescription of Naloxone (not harmful)

Harmful Ingredients and Opioids:

- Dextromethorphan (DXM)
- Pseudoephedrine
- Acetaminophen
- Vicodin
- Percocet
- Codeine
- Oxycontin
- Hydrocodone

****To avoid addiction to these drugs/active ingredients, please take them how they are advised on the OTC medication label and talk to your doctor about which medications are safest to use**

**** Different drugs/active ingredients affect people differently**

What You Can Do to Help Prevent Prescription and OTC Drug Abuse:

- ✓ Know the signs of Medication Abuse (constricted pupils, vomiting, weight loss, finding zip lock bags, nodding out, missing money, etc.)
- ✓ Have an open discussion about reasons why they are abusing and the harmful effects
- ✓ Discuss behavioral changes and why you are concerned for your child/student
- ✓ Lock up all medications in secure locations and never share your medications
- ✓ Keep track of your medication and safely dispose of used medicine
- ✓ Be a good role model and only take medication if it is necessary and follow instructions on proper intake of them
- ✓ Check bedrooms, backpacks, etc. for empty bottles or plastic bags and know the red flags
- ✓ Be aware of mood swings, grades declining, less or more sleep than usual, and/or loss of interest in friends or certain activities they used to enjoy
- ✓ BECOME EDUCATED!!! Know the power and dangers of OTC and prescription medication



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