The Prescription Drug Abuse Epidemic: School Nurses Forming Community Coalitions

Rebecca L. King, MSN, RN, NCSN
School Nurse
Red Clay School District Brandywine Springs School
Newark, DE
302-547-8913
Rebecca.King@redclay.k12.de.us

Educational Objectives:
At the completion of this presentation, the participant will be able to:

- Conduct an interactive exploration of the teen, parent and community problems created by prescription drug abuse, and
- Identify resources and create community coalitions to address school, family and community issues created by the abuse of prescription drugs.

About the Session:
The statistics are alarming and of epidemic proportion, yet because of the stigma surrounding drug abuse, it is a problem we keep quiet and don’t talk about. We need to speak up because we have a serious problem! The United States consumes 80% of the world’s prescription painkillers. 41% of kids mistakenly believe prescription medication is safer than abusing illegal street drugs. Drug poisoning deaths by overdose now surpass the rate of deaths from motor vehicle accidents which was always the leading cause of accidental deaths in the U.S. Three fourths of school nurses say that prescription drugs are a problem in their community. Because the school nurses are integral and trusted members of the local community, they are in a perfect position to provide awareness and education in their community about the dangers of prescription drug abuse. They have access to resources and possess the leadership skills to identify stakeholders and form community coalitions to address the multifaceted issues that arise from this epidemic.

Why this is important to a school nurse:
The purpose of this session is to enable the learner to gain an understanding of the disease process of addiction and the impact on youth and families. The learner will be able to identify resources within their community, identify stakeholders and subsequently create a community coalition to raise awareness and provide education to their community on the epidemic of prescription drug abuse.

Additional Author(s): Jenni Terry
The Prescription Drug & OTC Abuse Epidemic: School Nurses Forming Community Coalitions
What You Can Do to Safeguard the Kids in Your Communities

Rebecca King, MSN, RN, NCSN
Jenni Terry

Disclosure
Rebecca King, MSN, RN, NCSN:
I disclose the absence of personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this educational activity within the past 12 months.

Jenni Terry, Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA):
A member-based trade association, CHPA represents the leading manufacturers and marketers of over-the-counter (OTC) medicines and dietary supplements – including OTC cough medicine.

Smart Moves Smart Choices
SMSC is Sponsored by Janssen Pharmaceuticals in partnership with The National Association of School Nurses
Session Objectives

- Conduct an interactive exploration of the teen, parent, and societal aspects of prescription and over the counter (OTC) drug abuse

- Provide the knowledge and practical resources to move forward and address issues created by the abuse of prescription and OTC drugs

"Because of our unique position within the schools, students trust and confide in school nurses. We need to be prepared to respond accordingly when we hear about the misuse of prescription drugs, including drugs being mixed with alcohol or stimulant drinks. It is important to keep abreast of current trends, as students have access to so much information on the internet that can be potentially lethal."

Paula Apa-Hall
Past President, Oregon School Nurses Association
Former NASN Board Member
41% of kids mistakenly believe abusing Rx medicine is safer than abusing illegal street drugs like cocaine or heroin.

78% of School Nurses say that prescription drug abuse is a problem in their community.
Most teens get their hands on prescription drugs from the homes of friends and relatives (medicine cabinets, cupboards, drawers, etc.)

Prescription drugs are the drug of choice among 12-13 year olds.

Every 19 minutes, a person in the U.S. dies of a prescription drug overdose.

3,000 young adults (18-25) died of an Rx drug overdose in 2010.
Why Do Kids Abuse Prescription Medicines?

- Easy access
- Perceive them to be safer
- To get high
- To help them study
- To relieve stress and anxiety
- To experiment
- To fit in

Commonly Abused Rx Drugs

- Opioids (for pain)
- Stimulants (ADHD medicines)
- Benzodiazepines/ CNS Depressants (for anxiety and sleep disorders)
You May Know Them As...

**Opioids**
- Vicodin
- Percoset
- Oxycontin
- Demerol

**Benzodiazepines**
- Xanax
- Valium
- Nembutal

**Stimulants**
- Ritalin
- Concerta/Adderall
- Dexadrine

Adolescents’ Rationales for Sharing Prescription Drugs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Respondents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Got it from a family member</td>
<td>66.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a prescription but ran out</td>
<td>64.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have the same problem as the person who gave me the medicine</td>
<td>60.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want something strong for pain or headache</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have an emergency</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Got it from someone who knows about medicine</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need help sleeping</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want something strong for pimples or oily skin</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need the medicine but can’t afford to buy it</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have leftover medicine that would be wasted</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want to relax or feel good</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have heard a lot about this medicine from ads or commercials</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Multiple reasons were accepted; therefore, total may exceed 100%. Source: Pediatrics*

"The scariest thing I ever hear a parent say about drug abuse is ‘Not My Kid.’"
— Dr. Drew Pinsky

"They never think that it’s going to be them. Parents sometimes think their kids may get into trouble with drugs... but kids never think that they are going to be the one who becomes an addict."
— M. Embrey
Key Points

- Variety of users and variety of drugs being used- adolescents using Rx meds are a very diverse group

- Data is of significant concern:
  - 1 in 5 teens is given a legal Rx each year
  - 75% store it in an unsafe place
  - They don’t know it’s illegal to share
  - They don’t know the addictive properties & no one told them when it was prescribed
  - They don’t know how to dispose of it

Teen Drug Abuse: Popular Trends

- OTC (over-the-counter) medicine abuse

Teen Drug Abuse: Popular Trends

- Mixing prescription drugs with other substances
Teen Drug Abuse: Popular Trends

- Use/abuse of designer synthetic drugs (bath salts, Molly)

Who Are the Most Significant Teen Influencers?

- PARENTS & other caring adults

Teens who learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are up to 50% less likely to try drugs

How to Reach Teens

- Knowledge is power
- Learn the signs of abuse
- Establish a “family belief system”
- Create safeguards and safe practices
- Communicate within the family
- Communicate with outside influencers
Show me the resources.....

A Comprehensive Free Resource Available to You

Educational Videos and Classroom Curricula

Segment 1
Myth Busting
The facts behind teens’ concerns about prescription drug and alcohol use

Segment 2
Science of Addiction
Information on the physical consequences of prescription drug abuse in the developing teen

Segment 3
Changes for Life
Youth learn to make informed choices on how prescription drugs affect their bodies and lives, in school, sports and academic life, participation in sports and academic life

Segment 4
Media Literacy
Analyzing messages in the media through creation of a video or other visual display

Segment 5
What Parents Should Know
Information for parents about prescription drug abuse, communicating with teens, recognizing signs of use and tolerance
Government Resources

- **DEA** – Drug Enforcement Agency
- **NIDA** – National Institute on Drug Abuse
- **SAMHSA** – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- **ONDCP** – Office of National Drug Control Policy

How do Coalitions Fit In?

- Coalitions are the *Connector*
- Connect with the education sector
- Ask what schools are doing to reach students and parents
- Link with the school nurses in the school districts
- Utilize the numerous free resources
- Make SMSC part of your community’s toolbox
Johnson & Johnson School Health Leadership Fellows

Red Clay School Nurses
Kathleen Rigbee
North Star Elementary
Megan Flamand
At High School
Sharon Rose
Sparta Middle School
Rebecca King
Brandywine Springs School
Kris Bussow-Arora
Richardson Park Learning Center

RIGHT PLACE at the RIGHT TIME

http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dph/pdachome.html
“I am not a bad person trying to get good, I am a sick person trying to get well.”

Resources
- National Institute on Drug Abuse
- The Partnership at DrugFree.org
- The Medicine Abuse Project
- StopMedicineAbuse.org – Free Manuals
- Consumer Healthcare Products Association www.chipa.org
- Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America www.caada.org
- MEDLINEplus Health Information on Drug Abuse - National Library of Medicine, NIA
- www.nabowthinfluence.com - Office of National Drug Control Policy
- healthfinder.gov – U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- OTCSafety.org
- The Anonymous People - manyfacesvoice.org
- attackaddiction.com
- shutterproof.org
- memoinart.org
- Project Purple
- The Carson Institute

STOPMEDICINEABUSE
Teen Abuse of Over-the-Counter Cough Medicines
**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

**Today’s Discussion**

- Trends
- Resources
- Questions?

**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

**What is the problem?**

- Approximately one out of 25 teens report abusing over-the-counter cough medicine to get high.
- Roughly one in three teens knows someone who has abused OTC cough medicine to get high.

**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

**What is dextromethorphan (DXM)?**

- A safe and effective cough suppressant ingredient found in 100+ OTC cough/cold medicines
- The most widely used cough suppressant in the U.S.
- Abused by teens, taking 25 times or more than the recommended dose to get “high”
What is the problem?

- Only 59 percent of teens strongly believe that abusing OTC cough medicine to get high is risky. That means that nearly half believe that it is not.

- Nearly half of teens say that cough medicine is "easy to get" (to abuse).

Key Factors Driving Teen Medicine Abuse

- Misconception that abusing medicine is not as dangerous as "street drugs"

- Most of teens get via medicine cabinets at home or friend's house, internet, retailers, another's prescription, etc.

Abuse: The (Lousy) "High"

- Nausea and vomiting
- Stomach pain
- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Double or blurred vision
- Slurred speech
- Impaired physical coordination
- Rapid heart beat
- Dry mouth
- Numbness of fingers and toes
- Disorientation
STOPMEDICINEABUSE
Education at Point-of-Purchase

PARENTS:
Learn about teen medicine abuse
www.StopMedicineAbuse.org

STOPMEDICINEABUSE
How can we inform parents?

STOPMEDICINEABUSE
Products Containing DXM
- Alka-Seltzer Plus Cold
- Coricidin
- Delsym
- Dimetapp DM
- Mucinex DM
- Robitussin
- Sudafed cough medicines
- TheraFlu
- Tramcin
- TYLENOL Cough/Cold
- Vicks Formula 44
- Vicks NyQuil and DayQuil
- Zicam
- Generic/store brands
Resources for Nurses

How You Can Help
Order free brochures for parents & teens at StopMedicineAbuse.org

Other Ways to Help
- Write a letter to the editor!

Calling attention to teen cough medicine abuse

The U.S. Senate recently declared October 2014 National Medicine Abuse Awareness Month, calling for increased national attention of non-prescription abuse. As a mother of two and school nurse for the last 15 years, I’ve seen the devastating effects of medicine abuse.
Questions?

• Rebecca King, MSN, RN, NCSN
  Rebecca.King@redclay.k12.de.us

• Jenni Terry
   Consumer Healthcare Products
   Association
   jterry@chpa.org
RESOURCES for Prescription Drug Abuse Education and Awareness

Rebecca King, MSN, RN, NCSN

Rebecca.King@redclay.k12.de.us

Above the Influence, National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign: www.abovetheinfluence.com (The most recent campaign, which encourages kids to be “above the influence” of drugs. Includes various interactive resources, first-hand accounts, Q & A’s, and other information, including information specific to prescription drugs. A good place to see teen-produced video segments, as well as PSAs related to drug abuse to gather ideas for the students’ own advertisements).

American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) - a professional society representing over 3,000 physicians and associated professionals dedicated to increasing access and improving the quality of addiction treatment; educating physicians, other medical professionals and the public; supporting research and prevention; and promoting the appropriate role of physicians in the care of patients with addictions @ www.asam.org

“atTAcK addiction”: Grassroots group raising awareness in Delaware: www.attackaddiction.com

The Caron Institute: Caron offers addiction treatment for teens, young adults and adults: www.caron.org

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America: www.cadca.org

Consumer Healthcare Products Association: www.chpa.org

Five Moms Campaign - five moms from different backgrounds who have come together with a common concern: teenagers abusing OTC cough medicine to get high @ http://stopmedicineabuse.org

Healthfinder: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services- Your source for reliable health information from the Federal government @ www.healthfinder.gov

The Heroin Alert Program (Marie Allen with the New Castle County Police, Delaware) @heroinalert.org

Home to Homeroom: Partnered with The National Association of School Nurses (NASN) to provide school nurses with tools to use when spreading awareness in schools. Many of these tools can be used when speaking at assemblies, Parent Teacher Association meetings, or one-on-one meetings with parents or students @ www.stopmedicineabuse.org/home-to-homeroom

Medline Plus, http://medlineplus.gov/ (health information from the world's largest medical library, the National Library of Medicine).

OTCsafety.org – Your resource for Over-The-Counter Medicine Safety

Project Purple: Go Project Purple (an initiative of The Herren Project) was launched to break the stigma of addiction @ http://goprojectpurple.com/the-herren-project/
ManyFaces1Voice: Moms and dads, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters - all bringing the power and proof of recovery to communities. Together we will change public perception, and ultimately the public response to the addiction crisis. View the documentary “The Anonymous People” @ www.manyfaces1voice.org

The Medicine Abuse Project (through The Partnership at Drugfree): Free materials and resources to help prevent teens from abusing medicine @ www.medicineabuseproject.org

The Partnership at Drugfree.org: A multitude of resources including public service announcements, blogs, etc. @ www.drugfree.org

National Association of School Nurses, www.nasn.org

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA): The mission of the NIDA is to lead the Nation in bringing the power of science to bear on drug abuse and addiction @ http://www.drugabuse.gov

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA): The NIDA for Teens Web site helps educate adolescents ages 11 through 15 (as well as their parents and teachers) on the science behind drug abuse @ www.teens.drugabuse.gov

Shatterproof: Shatterproof will work to educate, empower and equip parents, families, educators, health care providers, legislators, and others to address addiction head on by building a national organization to address serious gaps in funding and resources for the disease of addiction @ www.shatterproof.org

Smart Moves, Smart Choices: www.smartmovessmartchoices.org To order a Smart Moves Smart Choices Toolkit visit: http://www.smartmovessmartchoices.org/school-tool-kit

SAMHSA- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: Behavioral health is essential to health, prevention works, people recover, treatment is effective. @ http://samhsa.gov/index.aspx

Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator: www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov