

# The Power of Parents

*“A child who gets through age 21 without smoking, using illegal drugs or abusing alcohol is virtually certain never to do so.”*

Source: (CASA) <http://www.casacolumbia.org/>

## Prescription (Rx) Drugs

**Almost 80% of recent heroin users have previously abused prescription drugs.** (Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)

### WHY? Because:

- If taken properly, Rx drugs can improve health. THEREFORE, many teens (30%) believe that they are a SAFE way to get HIGH
- **FACT:** Opioid Rx drugs are as addictive as using heroin which is an illegal opioid.
- 70% of children who abuse Rx drugs admit to getting them from family and friends.
- 30% of accidental childhood Rx drug poisonings involve a grandparent's medication.

## Commonly Abused Over-the-Counter (OTC) & Rx Drugs

- Cold medications (e.g., Sudafed, Benadryl)
- Depressants (e.g. Nembutal, Xanax, Valium)
- Stimulants (e.g. Adderall “the good grade drug”, Ritalin)
- Pain Relievers (Opioid) (e.g. OxyContin, Vicodin)

## Signs of Possible Rx and OTC Abuse:

- Unexplained missing Rx or OTC medications in your home
- Hyperactivity or sleeplessness (seen with stimulants)
- Slowed movements or reaction time, slurred speech, or disorientation (seen with depressants or pain relievers)
- Sudden weight loss or weight gain
- Excessive sleep
- Change in pupil size



# What Parents Can Do:



## Talk To Your Kids

- Have age-appropriate discussions with your kids about the dangers of taking Rx and OTC medications
- Talk about the medications you take and their purpose
- Use current events to start a conversation
- Look your child in the eye (note if change in pupil size)

## Know What Meds Are in Your Home

- Keep a list of all of your medications
- Dispose of unneeded medications (expired or leftover)
- Be aware of how many pills are in each bottle
- Periodically check your medications

## Secure Your Meds

- Store them in a locked cabinet or drawer.
- ✓ **TIP:** *Childproof lock boxes are available at hardware and big box stores*
- Be aware of medications stored in your refrigerator
- Keep an eye on the OTC and Rx drugs in your home

## Educate Yourself

- [www.drugfree.org/Parent](http://www.drugfree.org/Parent)
- [www.parentfurther.com](http://www.parentfurther.com)
- <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/prescription-drugs>

**Get Involved:** Contact your local prevention council

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**If you suspect your child is abusing drugs, HELP is available**

- 2-1-1 Connecticut Info Line: 24/7 phone line  
[www.infoline.org](http://www.infoline.org)
- SAMHSA National Drug Information Treatment and Referral Hotline: 800-662-HELP (4357)  
[www.dasis3.samhsa.gov](http://www.dasis3.samhsa.gov)

Compliments of Prevention Partnership Committee of

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