

# SAFE DRUG-FREE CLAY COUNTY

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## UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

- National Inhalants & Poisons Awareness Week~~March 16-20, 2009
- Kick the Habit Day/Children's Health Fair~~April 25, 2009
- April is Alcohol Awareness and Underage Drinking Prevention Month
- Alcohol Free Weekend~~April 3-5, 2009
- Prom Promise~~May 1-31, 2009
- Teacher Appreciation Day~~May 5, 2009
- National Day of Prayer~~May 7, 2009

## PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE—RISKY?

Lisa, a middle school student, overheard her parents saying that her brother's ADHD medicine was causing him to lose his appetite. Lisa was worried about her weight and started sneaking one of her brother's pills every other night. In order to keep her parents from finding out, she started asking her friends if she could have a couple of their pills.



Drew found an old bottle of prescription pain killers left over from his mother's recent operation. He thought since a doctor prescribed them that they were OK to try.

Both Lisa and Drew are taking

dangerous risks.

Prescription pain killers and other medications help many people live more productive lives, often freeing them from the symptoms of a medical condition like depression or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). However, that is only when they are prescribed for a specific individual for a particular condition.

This is, in fact, drug abuse. Taking prescription drugs in a way that wasn't recommended by a doctor is more dangerous than people think. It is also just as illegal as taking drugs off the street.

### ER and Mortality Rates

- In 2000, 43 percent of those who ended up in hospital emergency rooms from drug overdoses—nearly a half



million people—were there because of misusing prescription drugs.

- In seven cities in 2000 (Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Seattle, and Washington, DC) 626 people died from overdose of painkillers and tranquilizers. By 2001, such deaths had increased in Miami and Chicago by 20 percent.
- From 1998 to 2000, the number of people entering an emergency room because of misusing hydrocodone (Vicodin) rose 48%, oxycodone (OxyContin) 108%, and methadone 63%. The rates are intensifying: from mid-2000 to mid-2001, oxycodone went up in emergency room visits 44%.

## FIGHTING TEEN PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) recently launched its first major Federal effort to educate parents about teen prescription drug abuse.

Millions of television viewers watched the advertising kickoff of this national public awareness campaign during the Super Bowl last year.

The effort includes broadcast, print, and online advertising,

community outreach, and new print and online resources.

Though overall teen drug use is down nationwide, more teens abuse prescription drugs than any other illicit drug, except marijuana—more than cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine combined.

Every day, 2,500 kids age 12 to 17 abuse a prescription painkiller for the first time, and more people are getting addicted to

prescription drugs. Drug treatment admissions for prescription painkillers increased more than 300 percent from 1995 to 2005.

Teens are abusing prescription drugs because many believe the myth that these drugs provide a "safe" high. Especially troubling is that the majority of teens who abuse prescription drugs say they are easy to get and are often free.

## NEW DATABASE TO SPOT MULTI-DOCTOR ADDICTS

**January 5, 2009**—A new Iowa database to track prescription drug abuse will go online in March, almost three years after it was approved. The database should help doctors and pharmacists track drug addicts.

State regulators say the computer system will watch purchases of prescription drugs across the state. The system will spot abusers who visit multiple doctors to get duplicate prescriptions. Abusers also take prescriptions to different pharmacists so no one will notice.

Doctors can check the system to see what type of drugs a patient has already been prescribed.

## PRESCRIPTION DRUG PARTIES?

“Pharm” party? That’s what it is called when kids get a mixture of prescription medicine and meet up, swap and down fistfuls of pills.

“Trail mix”? Not what you think. It is actually bowls or baggies of mixed pills.

“Pharming” is what it is called when someone collects pills from the family medicine chest.

“Skittles” -- a street name for the common cold and flu medication Coricidin. Some kids will take a whole box (16 pills) and it causes them to hallucinate and their whole body feels like jello.

## DISTURBING PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE FACTS

- In 2006, more than 2.1 million teens ages 12 to 17 reported abusing prescription drugs.
- Among 12- and 13-year-olds, prescription drugs are the drug of choice.
- More teens abuse prescription drugs than any illicit drug except marijuana.
- Teens reportedly take these drugs because of their easy access and they can be cheaper than street drugs.

## THREE CATEGORIES OF MOST COMMONLY ABUSED DRUGS

### 1. Opioids

- **Examples:** oxycodone (OxyContin), hydrocodone (Vicodin), and meperidine (Demerol)
- **Medical uses:** Opioids are used to treat pain or relieve coughs or diarrhea.
- **How they work:** Opioids attach to opioid receptors in the central nervous system (the brain and the spinal cord), preventing the brain from receiving pain messages.

### 2. Central Nervous System (CNS) Depressants

- **Examples:** pentobarbital sodium (Nembutal), diazepam (Valium), and alprazolam (Xanax)
- **Medical uses:** CNS depressants are used to treat anxiety, tension, panic attacks, and sleep disorders.
- **How they work:** CNS depressants slow down brain activity by increasing the activity of a neurotransmitter called GABA. The result is a drowsy or calming effect.

### 3. Stimulants

- **Examples:** methylphenidate (Ritalin) and amphetamine/dextroamphetamine (Adderall)
- **Medical uses:** Stimulants can be used to treat narcolepsy and ADHD.
- **How they work:** Stimulants increase brain activity, resulting in greater alertness, attention, and energy.



DO	DON'T
Keep all medication in a secure place and monitor quantities.	Use expired or unused medication. You can return it to the pharmacy and they will dispose of it properly.
Set clear rules about all drug use (i.e., Do not share medications. Take only prescribed dosage ) and follow these rules yourself.	Leave your drink when at a social event, even if it is a non alcoholic event. Someone could put something in your drink.
Talk to your kids about prescription drug abuse.	Let your children use one of your pain killers for something like menstrual cramps.
Listen to your kids. Pay attention to unfamiliar	Ignore sudden changes in your child’s behavior.

## TIPS FOR PARENTS—WHAT TO DO AND WHEN

1. **Get Educated**—Learn as much as you can. You can find so much information online.
2. **Have The Talk**—Let them know that you know. Have the conversation at a time that everyone can be calm.
3. **Be Specific About Your Concerns**—Tell your child exactly what you’ve seen or found and how you feel about it.
4. **Don’t Make Excuses**—Parents tend to want to make excuses, but you need to make them accountable for their choices.
5. **Try To Connect**—Try to remain calm and find out what is going on in your child’s life without getting angry or into an argument.
6. **Be Prepared**—Practice what you preach. Don’t expect your child to admit there is a problem. Be prepared to answer questions about your childhood in an honest manner.
7. **Act Now**—Start monitoring your child’s activities and friends. You may need to set more rules on cell phone usage, computer and TV time.

## REPORTING UNLAWFUL SALES OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

The DEA has a toll-free international hotline to report the illegal sale and abuse of prescription drugs: 1-877-RxAbuse (1-877-792-2873).

If you find a Website you think is illegally selling human drugs, animal drugs, medical devices, biological products, foods, dietary supplements or cosmetics over the Web, please call the FDA immediately at 301-443-1240 or report online at [www.fda.gov/oc/buyonline/buyonlineform.htm](http://www.fda.gov/oc/buyonline/buyonlineform.htm).