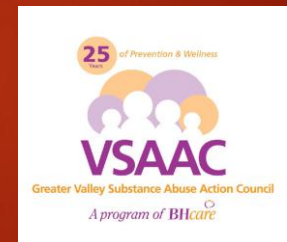


# Drug Awareness for Parents: Opioids 101



A thought provoking presentation by community experts to help parents recognize the signs of drug usage and the resources available for help and support.



# Presented by:

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# It's a Community Crisis





Jade Serrano  
Gabriella Perry  
Isabella DiPalma  
Francesca Perry

# Overview

<b>The problem</b>	Opioid drug abuse is growing in our community
<b>Why?</b>	Opioids are easy to obtain
<b>Why here?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High distribution of Rx and heroin drugs in small geographic region</li><li>• ↑ of accidental O/D</li><li>• Normalization of Rx drug use</li><li>• Low awareness of harm / addiction</li><li>• Access to treatment</li></ul>
<b>Strategies for community change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Help us be part of the solution &amp; take action today!</li></ul>

# Heroin

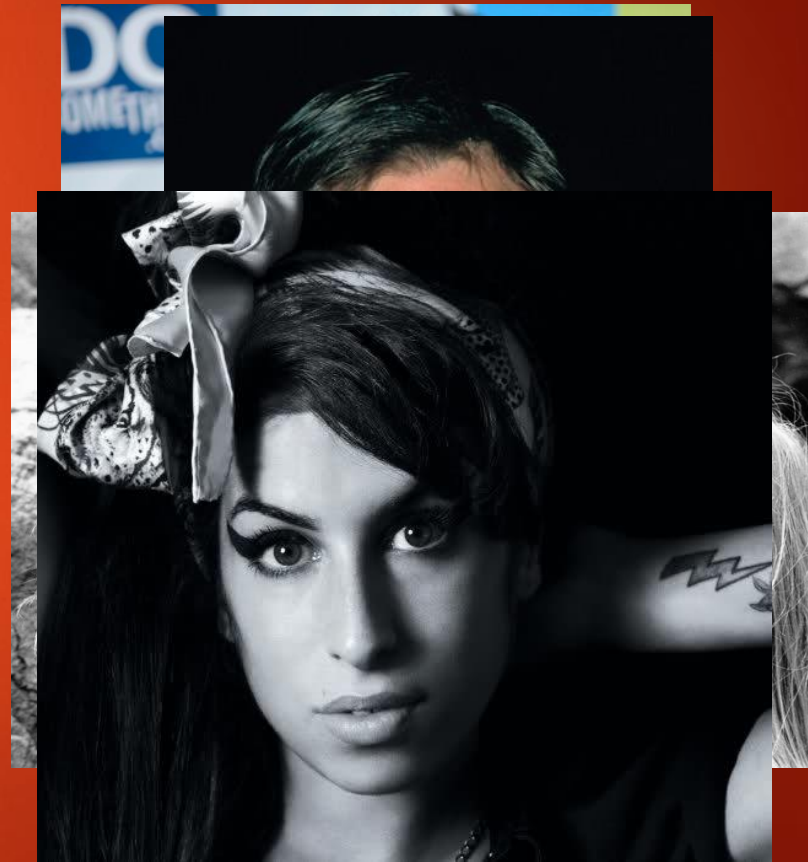
How?

Why?

What can we do?

# What if these people were still alive?

- ▶ Cory Monteith – Glee
- ▶ John Belushi – Saturday Night Live
- ▶ Chris Farley – Saturday Night Live
- ▶ Philip Seymour Hoffman - Actor
- ▶ Brad Renfro – Actor
- ▶ Jim Morrison – Singer -The Doors
- ▶ Pamela Courson – Jim Morrison's Long Time Girlfriend
- ▶ Kurt Cobain – Singer Nirvana
- ▶ Amy Winehouse – singer-songwriter



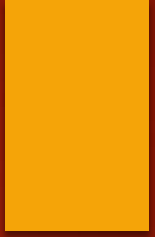
# What is heroin?





Junk

Brown sugar



Black tar

Horse

Big  
H

*Heroin Slang Names*

Smac

Skag

MU

Dope

C

# Heroin comes from poppies

Harvesters cut the pod and juice seeps out. The sap has a high content of morphine, which creates heroin.



# *Prescription Drug Abuse*

- ▶ Using prescription painkillers like Vicodin and Oxycontin can lead to addiction. When the pills run out, the person may turn to stealing pills from family members. Then they may turn to buying heroin because it is cheaper for the beginning user than black market painkillers.

# *How is heroin used?*

- ▶ Smoked, injected, snorted, ingested or sniffed.
- ▶ Addiction will occur with any of these methods.



# *Why do people use heroin?*

Need another high after running out of prescription painkillers like Vicodin and Oxycontin

“It felt so good.”\* But this is only the first time. After that, you are addicted and just using to stop the withdrawal effects.

Genetically vulnerable (addict in the family)

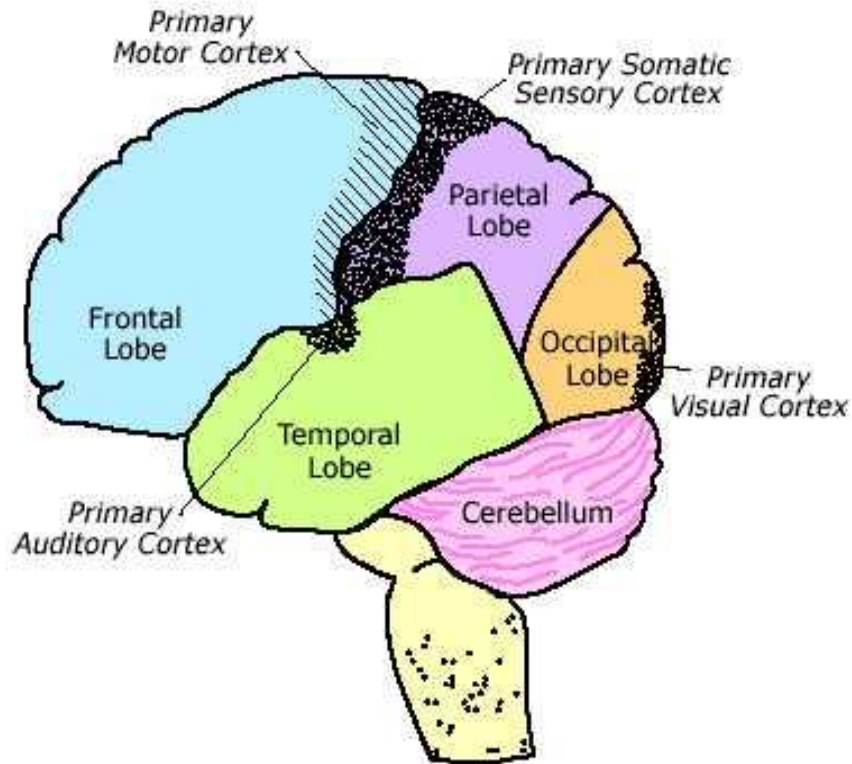
# *Why do people use heroin? (continued)*

- ▶ Lack of knowledge, they think it's "no big deal"
- ▶ Use of other drugs can lead to heroin
- ▶ Cheaper than cigarettes and prescription pain killers
- ▶ Increased purity (35% in 2010 vs. 4% in 1980's) allows users to snort or smoke it, which is less scary than injecting



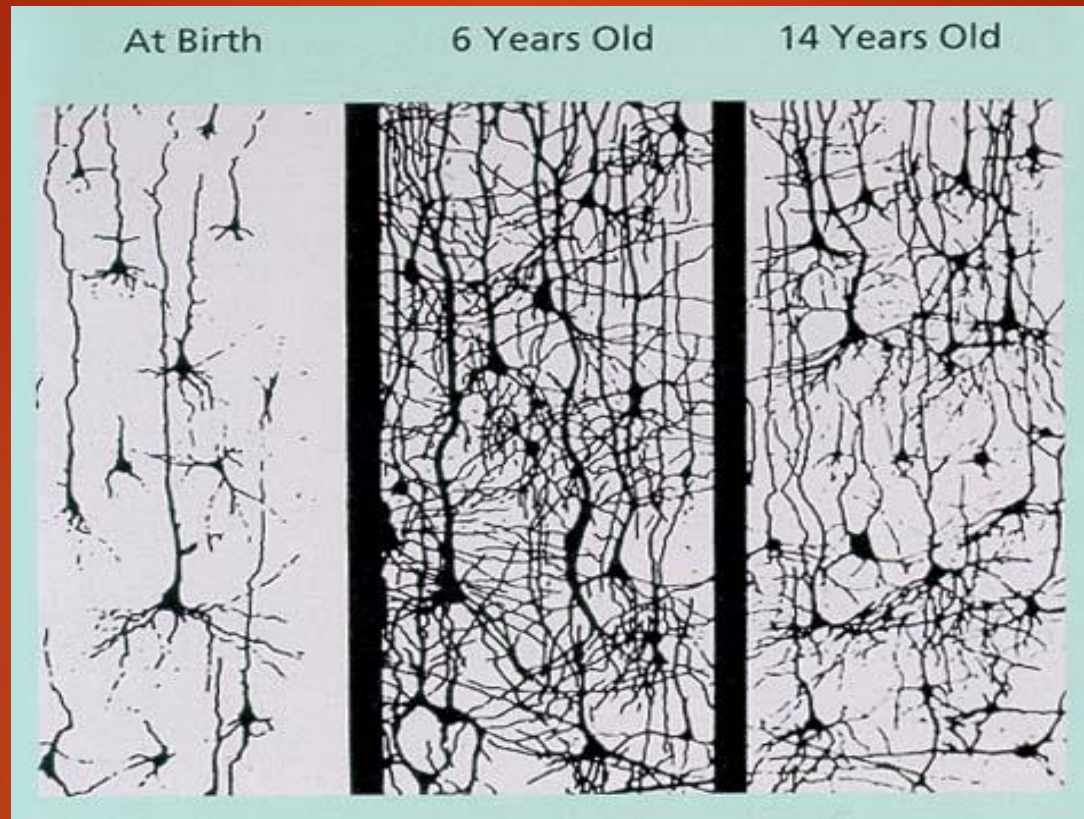
*How does heroin hurt your  
body?*

# Drugs affect our brain





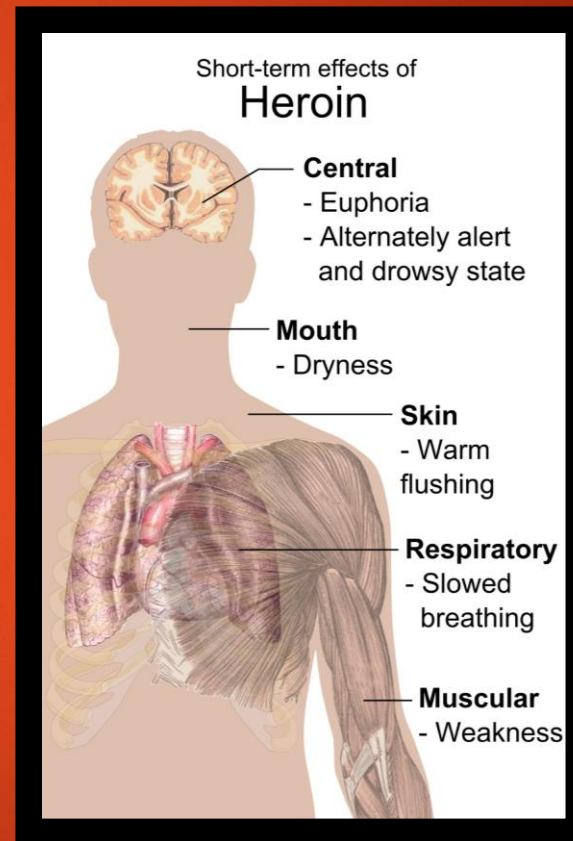
# Synaptic Pruning



Redundant connections are pruned away producing fewer but faster connections, setting the stage for proficiency. This “refinement” relies on a delicate balance of interactions between neurons. Alcohol or drugs act directly on brain chemistry and disrupt the balance.

# Short-term Effects

- Vomiting
- Constipation
- Severe flu symptoms, then alternately alert and drowsy state
- Slowed and slurred speech
- Impaired night vision

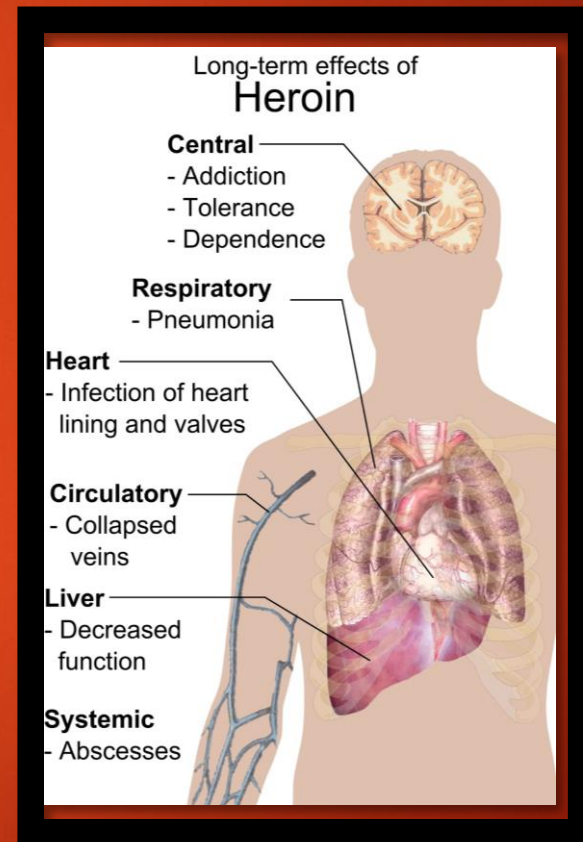


# Addiction

## Long-Term Effects

“Every heroin addict that you talk to will tell you that the first high was the greatest, and then they spend the rest of their life trying to chase that one great high. And then eventually it devolves into being all they’re doing is taking the drugs to keep from being sick.”

– DuPage County Coroner  
Dr. Richard Jorgensen



# *Long-Term Physical Consequences*

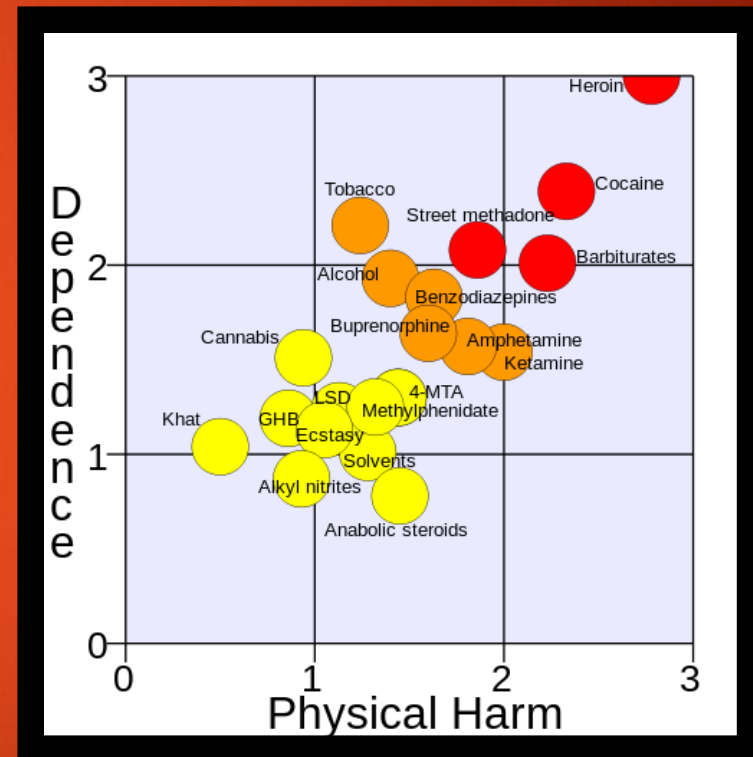
- ▶ Death
- ▶ Permanent damage to lungs, liver, kidney and brain
- ▶ HIV/AIDS
- ▶ Bad Teeth, inflammation of the gums
- ▶ Coma
- ▶ Muscular weakness, partial paralysis

# *Long-Term Physical Consequences*

- ▶ Reduced sexual capacity and long-term impotence in men
- ▶ Menstrual disturbance in women
- ▶ Loss of memory and intellectual performance
- ▶ Blister like lesions on the face
- ▶ Constant runny nose

# Addiction Comparison

- ▶ Heroin is one of the most addictive substances on the planet!
- ▶ It is more addictive than tobacco, cocaine and most other drugs



# How can I tell if my friend is using?

- Major changes in attitude and behavior – moody, angry, lying
- Ditching school
- MIA
- Dark pupils
- Falling asleep in class
- Stealing, pawning personal items



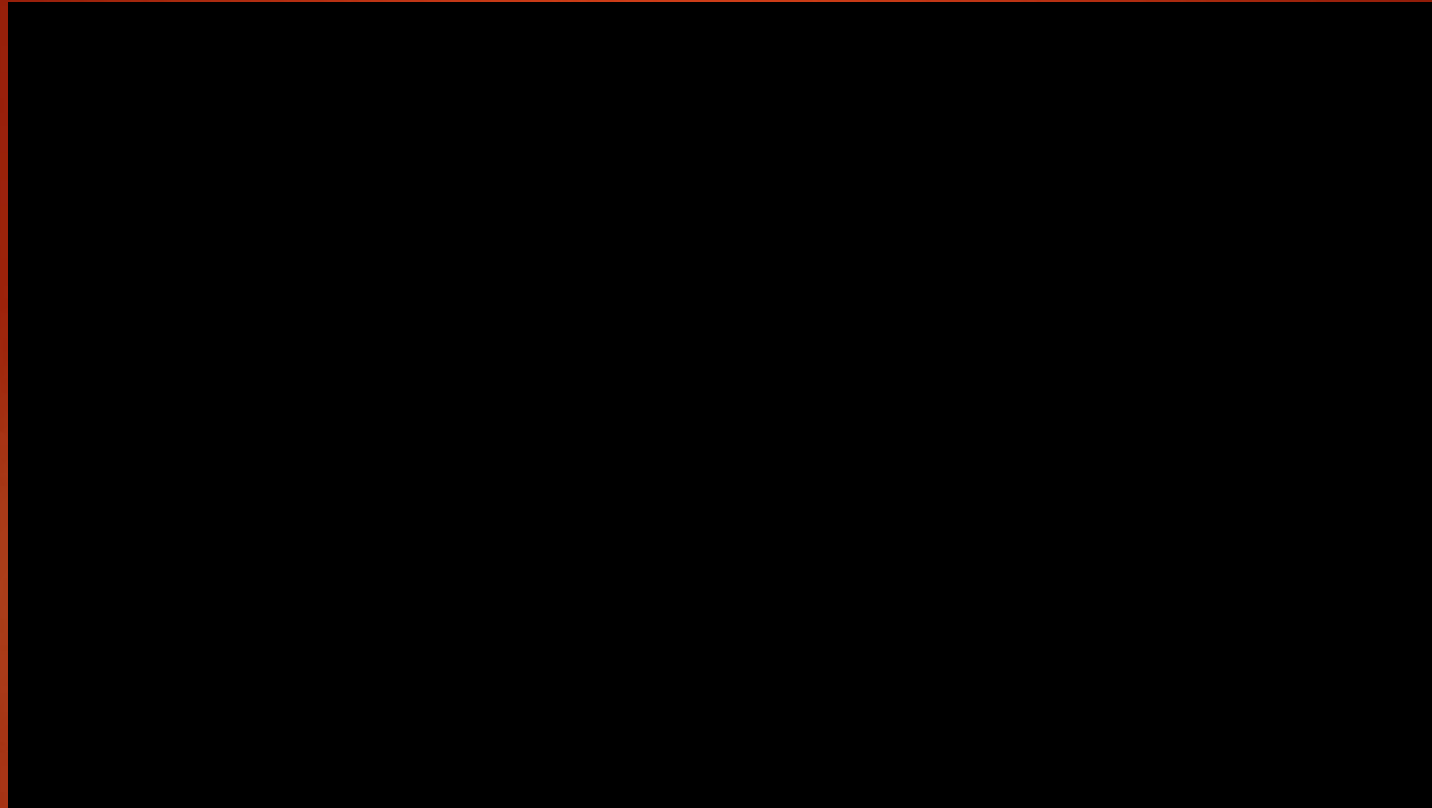
# *Signs of a heroin overdose*

- Slow or snoring breathing
- Blue lips and fingernails
- Cold clammy skin
- Shaking

At a party and see someone has overdosed? Call 911! Otherwise, your friend could die.



# *Signs of a heroin overdose*



Medics administered Narcan to the victim, hence his walking off the bus at the end of the video. If no one is around, or Narcan is not available, death is probable

# Narcan – Saving Lives



# *Narcan – Saving Lives*



Heroin is on the rise...soon death  
will join it.

Unless we do something about it.





Heroin is on the rise...soon  
death will join it.

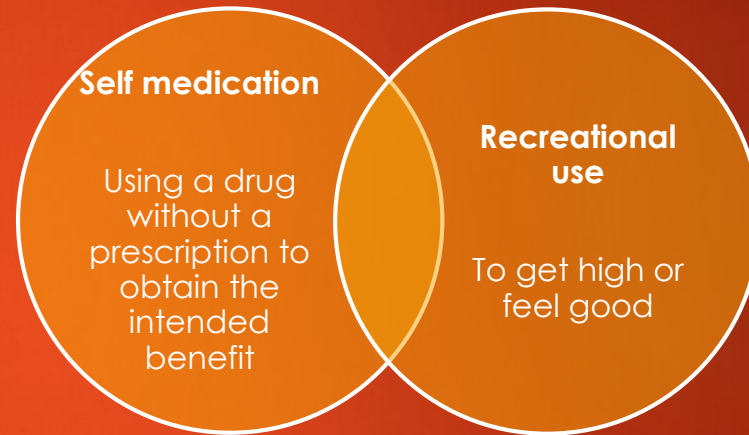
# Experimentation

- ▶ Normative behaviors
- ▶ Age of first use of any substance
  - ▶ Alcohol = drugs
  - ▶ Pot = pills = heroin

# What is Rx Abuse?

The misuse of Rx drugs is an under-recognized health issue that puts young lives at risk.

Misuse includes:

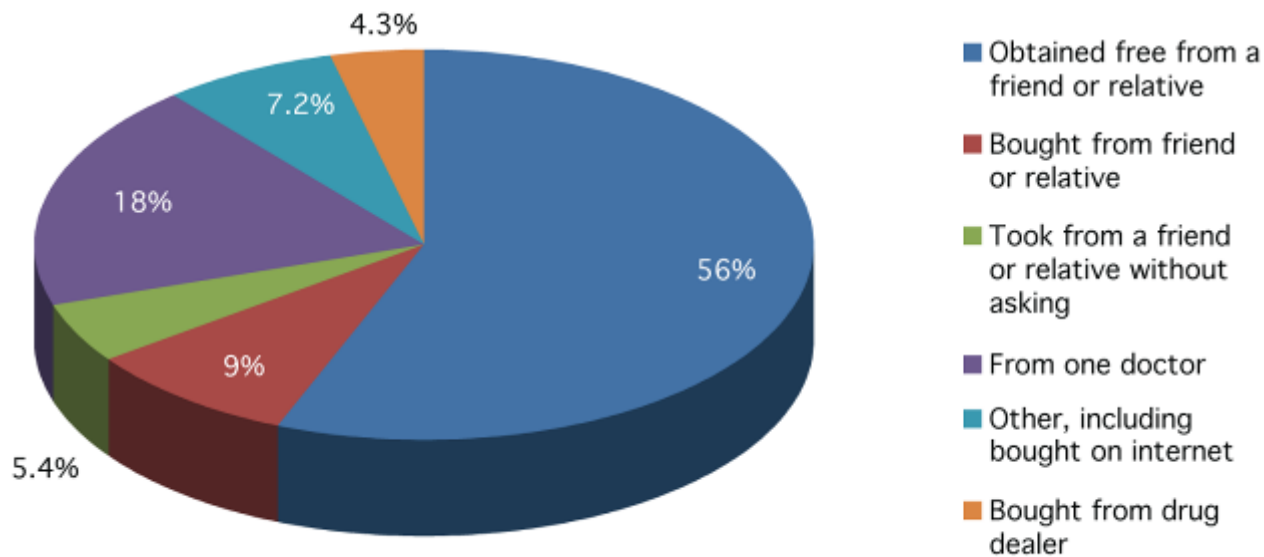


Rx drugs serve an important purpose when used *under a healthcare professional's supervision*.

Misuse can lead to overdose, addiction and death.

# Source of Prescription Drugs

Sources of Pain Relievers for Most Recent Nonmedical Use,  $\geq 12$  years





	How they work	Abused by teens to	Drug names
<b>Strong Pain Relievers</b>	Used to relieve moderate-to-severe pain, these medications block pain signals to the brain	To get high, increase feelings of well being by affecting the brain regions that mediate pleasure	Vicodin, OxyContin, Percocet, Lorcet, Lortab, Actiq, Darvon, codeine, morphine, methadone
<b>Stimulants</b>	Primarily used to treat ADHD type symptoms, these speed up brain activity causing increased alertness, attention, and energy that comes with elevated blood pressure, increased heart rate and breathing	Feel alert, focused and full of energy—perhaps around final exams or to manage coursework, lose weight	Adderall, Dexedrine Ritalin, Concerta
<b>Sedatives or tranquilizers</b>	Used to slow down or “depress” the functions of the brain and central nervous system	Feel calm, reduce stress, sleep	Valium, Xanax, Ativan, Klonopin, Restoril, Ambien, Lunesta, Mebaral, Nembutal, Soma

# Benzodiazepines

- ▶ **Xanax** is THE most prescribed medication in CT.
- ▶ Used for the treatment of anxiety, panic disorder, PTSD.
- ▶ Due to high potential for abuse, benzodiazepines are prescribed for short term use.

## Signs of Overdose:

- ▶ Drowsiness
- ▶ Confusion
- ▶ Blurred Vision
- ▶ Coma
- ▶ Inability to talk or respond
- ▶ Coma
- ▶ Deadly when mixed with alcohol

# Dangers of Abusing Rx Drugs

- Increases in blood pressure or heart rate
- Damage to the brain and other organs
- Accidental overdose/poisonings
- Physical dependence
- Addiction
- Breathing problems
- Seizures
- Death
- Risks associated with mixing multiple drugs or combining with alcohol



# Why Are Teens Abusing Rx Drugs?

- ▶ They're easy to get
- ▶ Thrill seeking
- ▶ Friends are doing it
- ▶ Escape problems or self-medicate
- ▶ Lack of self-esteem
- ▶ Seen as safer alternative with fewer side effects
- ▶ Less stigma associated with Rx drugs
- ▶ Parents less likely to disapprove

# Other Factors Driving Trend: Invincibility

- ▶ 10% of teens admitted abusing / mis-using medicine in the past 6 months
- ▶ 27% of teens mistakenly thought that prescription drugs were safer than street drugs
- ▶ 42% of teens who learned about prescription drugs were less likely to abuse prescription drugs than teens who didn't



# Talking to Teens About Rx Drug Abuse

## Do not normalize the behavior

Most teens are not abusing prescription drugs.

## Debunk common myths

Misuse and abuse of prescription medications is as dangerous as misuse and abuse of other substances and can be as addictive.

It's not okay to misuse these drugs, even "once and a while."

## If you are a parent

Be mindful about how you use and talk about medicines in front of teens.

# Opioid Medication Tips

Know what your child is taking

Never allow your child to take more than what's prescribed

Count pills

Lock up medication

Communicate to the school nurse and inform of medication being used

Do not give medication before going to school

Know the signs of overdose

Dispose of any excess medication

# Facts to Consider

If the doctor does not inquire about the following:

- Underlying mental health / substance use disorders
- Past use of any substances (alcohol, marijuana, etc.)
- Student's history of addiction
- Current prescribed & OTC medications
- Ask if there is non narcotic pain relief option



# Take It To The Box

Ansonia Police Dept.

New Haven Police Dept.

Seymour Police Dept.

Shelton Police Dept.

West Haven Police Dept.





U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ★ DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION  
**OFFICE OF DIVERSION CONTROL**

## *What are we doing?*

Local, State and Federal Agencies are working together to identify local dealers and their distribution resources in the Valley. This has become a high priority



State of Connecticut  
**DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

# Prevention Tips

Parents have the greatest influence – parent communication

Increase youth assets

Look for physical and behavioral warning signs

Lock up and dispose of medications

Understand e-commerce & hidden technology

# Resources

## *Substance Abuse Treatment (Outpatient)*

- BHcare  
(203) 736-2601 (18+)
- Wellmore Behavioral Health  
(203) 723-9599
- Children's Center of Hamden  
(203) 248-2116
- Rushford  
(203) 630-5280
- Recovery Network of Programs  
(203) 929-1954

# Resources

## *Inpatient*

- Rushford at Stonegate  
(877) 577-3233
- CT Renaissance  
(203) 367-7570
- Wellspring  
(203) 266-8000
- Recovery Network of Programs  
(203) 929-1954

# Resources

## ***On-line Resources***

Turningpointct.org

Text CTL to 741741

## ***BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES***

PARENT CHILD RESOURCE CENTER

(203) 954-0543

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

(203) 735-7481

# Resources

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

C.A.R.E.S (COMMUNITY ADDICTION &  
RECOVERY EDUCATION AND SUPPORT)

1-855-406-0246

[WWW.THECARESGROUP.ORG](http://WWW.THECARESGROUP.ORG)

## **RECOVERY SERVICES**

CT COMMUNITY FOR ADDICTION  
RECOVERY (CCAR) **(203)-332-3303.**

# Resources

**25**  
Years

*of Prevention & Wellness*



**Greater Valley Substance Abuse Action Council**

*A program of BHcare*

203-736-8566

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[lmcfarland@bhcare.org](mailto:lmcfarland@bhcare.org)



Thank You