

Got Drugs?

Turn in your unused or expired medications for safe disposal
Saturday, April 30.



Saturday, April 30, 2011
10 am - 2 pm
Roanoke Civic Center
Salem Police Department
Botetourt County - at the Daleville Kroger

Why? Rates of prescription drug abuse in the U.S. are increasing at alarming rates - especially among teens who get prescription drugs from their friends and family's medicine cabinets.

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U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration • Roanoke Police Department
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Roanoke Area Youth Substance Abuse Coalition
Promoting a Safe & Drug Free Roanoke Valley

www.RAYSAC.org



Prescription Drug Abuse **A Rising Health Issue**

Although the percentage of teens using illegal drugs is down, the number of teens abusing prescription medication and over-the-counter drugs has reached record highs. Many teens think that abusing prescription drugs is safer than abusing illicit drugs because they are prescribed by doctors. That's true, but it doesn't mean that these drugs are safe for someone who was not prescribed the drug or when they are taken in ways other than as prescribed.

Youth as young as 12 are trying or using prescription drugs non-medically to get high or for "self-medicating." Pharmaceuticals are often more available to teens because they can be taken from the medicine cabinet at home. Because these drugs are so readily available, many teens believe they are a safe way to get high. Moreover, not many parents are talking to their youth about the health risks and dangers of taking non prescribed prescription drugs.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), every day 2,500 youth age 12 to 17 abuse a pain reliever for the very first time. And, more teens abuse prescription drugs than any illicit drug except marijuana. In 2008, more than 2.1 million teens ages 12 to 17 reported using prescription drugs to get high. Also, many teens report mixing prescription drugs and alcohol. Using these drugs in combination can cause respiratory failure and death.

What parents need to know: One easy way to prevent prescription drug abuse is to keep all prescription medication hidden, or locked in a safe place. Parents and family members whose homes teens visit should keep prescription medications out of teens reach, rather than in the medicine cabinet. You should also talk to your teen and warn them that taking prescription medications without a doctor's supervision can be just as dangerous and as potentially lethal as taking illicit drugs.

There are serious health risks related to abuse of prescription drugs. A single large dose of prescription or over-the-counter painkillers or depressants can cause breathing difficulty that can lead to death. Stimulant abuse can lead to hostility or paranoia, or the potential for heart system failure or fatal seizures. Even in small doses, depressants and painkillers have subtle effects on motor skills, judgment, and ability to learn.

Parents, talk to your teen....they will listen!