BROCHURE

Know More. Do More.

Understanding Substance Misuse in Teens

This information was made possible by the Dublin ACT Coalition in partnership with Nationwide Children's Hospital.

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Welcome.

Every day, we hear stories about how opioids are in our communities — particularly, prescription painkillers — and the dangers posed by these medicines, especially when it comes to our kids. And every day, we're uncovering new information about opioids, the effect these substances have on kids physically, mentally and emotionally, how misuse can be prevented, and where families can find treatment.

The challenge, however, is navigating all of this information and knowing where and how to start being aware and getting help.

Nationwide Children's

Dublin ACT Coalition

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OUR TEAM

The Dublin ACT (Adolescents and Community Together) Coalition, a team focused on preventing and reducing youth substance abuse, has partnered with Nationwide Children's Hospital to develop a series of toolkits that schools, parents and communities can use to prevent and reduce alcohol and other drug misuse in their communities.

TOOLS

As part of this initiative, we have created a series of tools that schools can use to launch or enhance an alcohol and drug prevention program, including:

- **A comprehensive toolkit** detailing steps you can take to know what's happening in your community, build your team, educate staff and students, communicate with parents, establish policies, and seek a higher level of care when needed.
- **A brochure** providing the facts about teenagers and prescription drug misuse, with details about the potential pathways — in particular, alcohol, tobacco and marijuana — plus information on how a young person's brain can be affected forever by repeated use of alcohol and other drugs, and the unintended consequences of misuse.
- **Supplementary resources focused on athletes** and prescription painkiller misuse for athletic trainers, coaches, parents and athletes.
- **Visuals you can use** as handouts and posters or on social media to drive awareness and engagement among parents, students and members of your community.
- **A list of online resources** providing additional information and support as you continue to build or enhance your program.

TOGETHER

Our role as parents, educators, community, faith and business leaders, and law enforcement is to protect our kids from dangerous substances by knowing the risks and signs of misuse, helping them make the right choices and getting access to the support they need.

We hope this resource is a helpful start.

The first step is to become informed.

No teen starts out wanting to be addicted to drugs or alcohol, and all teens for one reason or another can be at risk. They may have been prescribed a painkiller for a sport injury or when they had a wisdom tooth pulled. They may have been tempted by a stimulant they heard will help them focus during their SATs. Maybe they were offered a pill to try when a friend or relative said it was safe. Or, maybe they found something in the medicine cabinet at home.

!

OUR ROLE as parents, educators, law enforcement, and community, faith and business leaders is to protect our kids from dangerous substances — including prescription drugs, alcohol, tobacco and marijuana — by knowing the risks and signs of misuse, helping them make the right choices and getting them access to the support they need.

The facts on teens and prescription drug misuse

13.9% of 12th graders have ever used a prescription drug non-medically.

800,000+
KIDS AGES 12-17

In the United States, about a third of the 2.4 million Americans who used prescription drugs non-medically for the first time, were kids ages 12 to 17.

Prescription drugs are among the most commonly used drugs taken non-medically by 12th graders.

About 1 in 13 12th graders used the prescription stimulant Adderall® non-medically in 2020.

Adderall affects chemicals in the brain and nervous system that contribute to hyperactivity and lack of impulse control. Adderall contains FOUR amphetamines!

6.8% of 12th graders have used a prescription drug non-medically in the past month.

14.3% of U.S. students have misused a prescription drug in their lifetime.

12.2% of teens have used prescription pain relievers without a doctor's prescription one or more times.

12% were 9th graders
14.6% were 10th graders
10.6% were 11th graders
11.1% were 12th graders

Where do teens get prescription drugs?

3.9% FROM A drug dealer

70.9% FROM A friend or relative

20% FROM A doctor

VICODIN Nearly **1 in 23** 12th graders misused the opioid pain reliever Vicodin®.

What is drug misuse?

Misuse of a prescription and over-the-counter drug is defined as the non-medical use of the drug and typically happens several ways:

- Taking a medicine in a manner or dose other than what's prescribed or directed
- Taking a medicine to get high or to enhance performance
- Taking someone else's prescription medicine, even if it's for a valid medical complaint — like pain

Easy access is a key reason for prescription misuse.

Experimenting and use start as early as middle school.

10.3% of eighth graders report ever taking a prescription medication without a doctor's prescription or differently than how a doctor told them to take it.

The percentage of 8th graders who misused amphetamines, inhalants, and cough medicine over the past 12 months continues to increase.

These numbers all have names and faces. With our help, our kids can have healthy, happy futures.

KNOW THE SIGNS OF POSSIBLE DRUG ABUSE

Personal appearance changes, such as:

- Messy, careless appearance and poor hygiene
- Red, flushed cheeks or face
- Heavy sweating
- Tired
- Itchy skin
- Fast weight loss

Behavioral changes, such as:

- Decreased motivation
- Hostility or anger
- Unusually clumsy, lack of coordination
- Slurred speech
- Loud or obnoxious behavior
- Being deceitful or secretive

Changes in routine, such as:

- New friends and/or being secretive about them
- Lying about new interests and activities
- Loss of interest in school or things they once cared about
- Money/valuables missing from home
- Demand for more privacy, locked doors, eye contact avoidance
- Skipping school

Prescription Drugs

Prescription drugs are strong medicines used to treat a specific illness or condition and come with the risk of side effects — some that are very dangerous. Before prescribing any medicine, doctors consider the potential benefits and risks to each patient. When they are misused, prescription drugs can be just as dangerous as illegal substances. **Know the commonly misused meds:**

OPIOIDS

a class of drugs that include the illegal drug heroin, synthetic opioids such as fentanyl, and pain relievers you can get legally by prescription

PRESCRIBED TO TREAT
Pain

COMMONLY KNOWN AS
Vicodin®, OxyContin® or Percocet®, among others

STREET NAMES
Happy Pills, Hillbilly Heroin, OC, Oxy, Percs, Vikes

CNS (central nervous system) DEPRESSANTS

medicines that slow the brain down, and are used to treat anxiety and sleep problems

PRESCRIBED TO TREAT
Anxiety and sleep disorders

COMMONLY KNOWN AS
Valium®, Xanax® or Ambien®, among others

STREET NAMES
A-minus, Barbs, Candy, Downers, Phennies, Red Birds, Reds, Sleeping Pills, Tooies and Tranks

STIMULANTS

medicines that increase alertness, attention, energy, blood pressure, heart rate and breathing rate

PRESCRIBED TO TREAT
ADHD (attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder)

COMMONLY KNOWN AS
Adderall® and Ritalin®, among others

STREET NAMES
Bennies, Black Beauties, Hearts, Roses, Skippy, Speed, The Smart Drug, Uppers, Vitamin R

! WHEN A CHILD OR TEEN HAS BEEN PRESCRIBED OPIOIDS:

MONITOR Only allow your child to take medicines as prescribed. No one else should take this medicine. Know where medicines are at all times, and keep count.

SECURE Keep your child's medicine in a locked cabinet or lock box AND out of the reach of children. Always keep medicine in the original bottle from the pharmacy.

TRANSITION Get your child off of opioid medicine and on a non-opioid painkiller as soon as you can.

DISPOSE Medicine should be disposed of responsibly when it is no longer needed. Use drop off disposal locations or ask about neutralizing agents you can buy in retail pharmacies.

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Know the potential pathways to prescription drug addiction...

Misuse of alcohol and other drugs in kids up to age 24 disrupts critical brain development and can create addiction patterns that last a lifetime. Our goal is to limit a child's exposure to drugs and misuse of other harmful substances — including, alcohol, tobacco and marijuana.

Alcohol

ALCOHOL IS A DRUG TOO.

Alcohol is illegal for teens and still, underage drinking is often viewed as "innocent" — something "every kid tries." There is no "safe" dose of alcohol for young people. Any amount in a young person's body puts that child at higher risk for alcohol-related problems.

Alcohol causes both physical and emotional harm, including:

- Alcoholism can develop in teens in a matter of months.
- The younger a child starts using alcohol, the greater the chance he or she will become an alcoholic.
- Children of alcoholics have a 4 to 10 times greater risk of becoming alcoholics than children of non-alcoholics.
- Adolescence is a period of rapid growth. The brain, nervous system, reproductive system and liver are still maturing in young people and are much more sensitive to chemicals and drugs.
- Like physical changes, a young person's sense of identity and basic social skills are still emerging. Alcohol gets in the way of this development by producing a chemical "high" that affects learning how to deal with others, carrying out responsibilities and handling problems. Kids who drink heavily essentially stop growing up — mentally, emotionally and socially.
- Alcohol use can lead to unintended consequences, such as sexual assault, pregnancy and death from car crashes.

KNOW THE SIGNS OF ALCOHOL USE.

- Empty bottles, shot glasses, bottle openers
- Water or soda bottles (or other containers) used to conceal liquor
- Smell of alcohol on the breath
- Slurred speech
- Lack of coordination
- Nausea and vomiting
- Hangovers

DID YOU KNOW?

Alcohol is the most widely used drug among teens and can often lead to experimenting with prescription drugs.

16.2% of high school students had their first drink of alcohol other than a few sips before age 13.

25.9% of high school students had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more of the past 30 days.

13.4% of high school students had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row (within a couple of hours) on one or more of the past 30 days.

13.6% of middle school students had their first drink of alcohol before the age of 11.

30.4% of middle school students report ever drinking.

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Tobacco

TOBACCO IS ONE OF THE MOST ADDICTIVE DRUGS.

Smoking, chewing and dipping all involve nicotine, and use of tobacco in any form is unsafe for teens.

- The younger people are when they start smoking, the more likely they will become long-term users.
- Nearly 9 out of 10 adult smokers report having started smoking by the age of 18; half of them will die early from tobacco-related diseases.
- Long-term use of tobacco can result in high blood pressure, heart attack, chronic bronchitis, pneumonia, emphysema, and/or cancer of the lungs, throat and mouth.

Why teens like e-cigarettes, vape pens and JUULs

A recent survey finds that 82% of U.S. high school students think e-cigarettes are less harmful than regular cigarettes, and teens who use e-cigarettes are more likely to go on to use traditional cigarettes than those who don't.

And while the impact of e-cigarettes on health is not yet fully understood, one study suggests that puffing even just one e-cigarette with nicotine can cause heart damage in non-smokers.

Here are the top reasons teens say they enjoy using e-cigarettes:

- They like doing tricks with the vapor — blowing smoke rings or creating funnels of smoke that look like tornadoes.
- They like the flavoring in nicotine liquid — cappuccino, pomegranate and single-malt scotch.
- If friends and family view the devices as cool or acceptable, a teen is more likely to use them.

KNOW THE SIGNS OF TOBACCO USE.

- Having tobacco products around, such as cigarettes, lighters, loose tobacco, rolling papers, chew tins, spit bottles, vape pens, e-cigarettes and vape juice (These items are often kept hidden in backpacks, pockets, dresser drawers or in a teen's car.)
- Strong smell of smoke on the child, clothing, bedding, carpet and inside the car
- Mood changes, including anxiety, irritability, stress or anger
- Burns or soot on fingers or lips

82% of U.S. high school students think e-cigarettes are less harmful than regular cigarettes.

16.7% of middle schoolers + **36.7%** of high schoolers were current users of cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, or electronic vaping products.

21.5% of high school students report ever tried cigarette smoking.

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VAPING CAN LEAD TO SMOKING AND SERIOUS LUNG INJURY.

Vaping has been around for more than a decade, but its popularity began to explode in 2017 — so much so that the U.S. Surgeon General declared it an epidemic among youth in the United States. Beyond nicotine, many youth are using electronic vaping products such as JUUL, e-cigarettes, and hookas to inhale nicotine or other substances which may include THC.

What exactly is vaping?

According to the Center on Addiction, vaping is inhaling and exhaling the aerosol, often referred to as vapor, that's produced by an e-cigarette or similar device, such as JUULs and vape pens.

Although many substances can be vaped, three are most common:

- flavored e-liquids
- flavored e-liquids with nicotine
- marijuana

Nicotine is known to be highly addictive and is particularly dangerous to teens and young adults, whose brains are continuing to develop through their mid- to late 20s. During this time, nicotine use may rewire neurological pathways, making it easier to get hooked on other substances and contribute to problems with concentration, learning and impulse control.

78% ↑ increase

in vaping by high school students in one year, according to the U.S. Surgeon General

47.7% of high school students

25.7% of middle school students

Have used electronic vaping products

4x

Teens and young adults who use e-cigarettes, are almost four times as likely as their non-vaping peers to begin smoking traditional cigarettes, according to a review published online in JAMA Pediatrics.

KNOW THE SIGNS OF VAPING.

- Presence of devices that look like flash drives, e-juice bottles, pods (that contain e-juice) or product packaging
- Online or store purchases or unusual packages
- Slight scent of a flavoring for which there's no other source
- Increased thirst or nosebleeds
- Decreased caffeine use; vapers often develop sensitivity to caffeine
- Lingo such as "atty" for atomizer, "VG" for vegetable glycerin found in e-juice and "sauce" for e-juice
- Changes in appearance and behavior, including bloodshot eyes, dry mouth and thirst, increased appetite, and mood swings
- Changes in friends or decrease in usual activities

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Vaping

Often mistaken for water vapor, the aerosol produced from vaping actually consists of fine particles, many of which contain varying amounts of toxic chemicals that have been linked to cancer as well as respiratory and heart disease.

Beyond nicotine, toxins identified by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration that are found in e-cigarettes include:

- **Propylene glycol** — a common additive in food but also found in antifreeze, paint solvent and artificial smoke from fog machines
- **Carcinogens** — chemicals known to cause cancer, including acetaldehyde and formaldehyde
- **Benzene** — a known carcinogen found in paints, lacquers and varnish removers; industrial solvents; and gasoline and other fuels
- **Acrolein** — an herbicide primarily used to kill weeds that can cause irreversible lung damage
- **Diacetyl** — a chemical linked to the lung disease bronchiolitis obliterans, also referred to as "popcorn lung"
- **Diethylene glycol** — a toxic chemical used in antifreeze that's linked to lung disease
- **Heavy metals** — Lead, nickel and tin, among others
- **Cadmium** — a toxic metal found in conventional cigarettes that leads to breathing problems and disease

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD STOP VAPING.

- Be equipped with the facts.
- Look for opportunities to talk about vaping with your child.
- Try to understand why your child likes or has tried vaping.
- Set expectations, sharing why you don't want your child to vape.
- Teach your child how to resist and refuse temptation.

1,600

serious lung injuries

related to vaping and dozens of deaths reported across 49 states

Covid-19

Researchers at the Tobacco Research and Treatment Center at Massachusetts General Hospital are concerned that those who vape may be more susceptible to coronavirus infection and less resistant to a Covid-19 infection.

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Marijuana

MARIJUANA CAN LEAD TO OTHER, MORE DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES.

Marijuana is the most often used illegal drug in this country and the second-leading substance people are being treated for in the United States. Marijuana is 10 to 20 times more potent than it was 50 years ago and often leads to experimenting with stronger, more lethal substances.

- Young people rarely use other illegal drugs without first using marijuana.
- It can take about three to six weeks for the body to rid itself of THC — the addictive chemical found in marijuana.
- Long-term use of marijuana causes damage to the lungs, heart, brain, reproductive system, and immunity to infections and disease.
- Long-term use of marijuana may be linked to lower IQ (as much as an 8 point drop) later in life.
- The product may be laced with other dangerous substances the user may not be aware of

Medical marijuana: if someone in your family has been prescribed medical marijuana, please keep this locked and secure, as you do alcohol and other prescription drugs.

KNOW THE SIGNS OF MARIJUANA USE.

- Disrupted learning and memory
- Trouble with thinking and problem solving
- Loss of motor coordination
- Distorted perception (sights, sounds, time, touch)
- Increased heart rate
- Anxiety
- Loss of motivation
- Dry mouth
- Increased use of eye drops
- Burns or soot on fingers or lips

Marijuana today is 10 to 20 times more potent than 50 years ago.

20.5%
of twelth graders used marijuana one time or more during the past 30 days.

29.7%
of high school students used marijuana one time or more in their life.

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Repeated use of alcohol and other drugs can rewire a person's brain forever.

Use of alcohol and other drugs in kids up to age 24 disrupts critical brain development and can create addiction patterns that last a lifetime.

Our goal is to limit the exposure to drugs and misuse of other substances — alcohol, marijuana and tobacco — that are harmful to young brains.

Know the risks of misuse or addiction — especially, your family's history — and share this with your child.

- Those who use prescription opioids for a valid medical reason are at greater risk for misuse.
- The risk of addiction is even higher if there's a family history.
- Fifty percent of addiction is the result of genetic predisposition.
- Children of addicts are eight times more likely to become addicts.
- In the case of adopted children, it's best to assume they may have a family history of addiction.
- Keep them safe from alcohol and other drugs.

DID YOU KNOW?

Your family's risk factors for alcoholism and addiction are an important and effective way to start a conversation with your child about alcohol and other drugs and why they may be at risk.

up to age 24

when misuse of alcohol and other drugs can rewire a person's brain forever.

The unintended consequences of alcohol and other drug misuse

Just one instance of alcohol or drug misuse can have profound negative consequences, according to the Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs and Health. Some of these effects include:

Indirect consequences related to risky behaviors that often go along with alcohol and other drug misuse

- Impaired judgment can lead to risky behaviors, such as driving under the influence (DUI), unprotected sex, and needle or syringe sharing.

Immediate, direct health consequences

- Drug and alcohol misuse can affect a teen's heart rate and body temperature and/or result in psychotic episodes, overdose and death.

Longer-term health effects on a person's physical and mental health

- Heavy drinking can lead to high blood pressure, liver disease and cancer.
- Regular marijuana use is linked with chronic bronchitis.
- Use of stimulants, such as cocaine can lead to heart disease.

Longer-term societal consequences

- Reduced productivity (ability to get things done)
- Higher healthcare costs
- Accidental pregnancies
- Spread of infectious disease
- Drug-related crime
- Interpersonal violence
- Stress within families
- Direct and indirect effects on communities, the economy and society as a whole.

RISK FACTORS FOR ADDICTION

- FAMILY HISTORY
- MENTAL HEALTH
- ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUGS IN THE HOME
- SEXUAL ABUSE
- PHYSICAL ABUSE
- ADDICTION

8x

children of addicts are 8x more likely to develop an addiction.

50%

of addiction is the result of genetic predisposition.

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SOURCES:

- National Institute on Drug Abuse
- National Institutes of Health
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- National Survey on Drug Use and Help
- Partnership for Drug Free Kids
- 2019 Ohio Youth Risk Behavior Survey
- Nationwide Children's Hospital
- Nationwide Childen's Hospital Science and Management of Addiction
- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA 2020)
- Monitoring the Future Survey Results
- The Teen Treatment Center
- Addictionsandrecovery.org
- Candleinc.com
- The Stand Project, Upper Arlington
- The New York Times

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