Generation Rx: The Adolescent Pharming Phenomenon

Satellite Conference and Live Webcast
Thursday, April 3, 2008
11:00 - 1:00 p.m. (Central Time)

Produced by the Alabama Department of Public Health
Video Communications and Distance Learning Division

Faculty

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Southern Regional Director
The Partnership for Drug-Free America
Asheville, NC

Objectives

• Discuss the prevalence of intentional prescription drug abuse in adolescents.
• List the reasons why this trend has become so prevalent.
• Understand the specific dangers related to “pharming” and how adults can help adolescents avoid this risky behavior.

Founded 20 Years Ago

Goal

– Apply marketing and communications expertise to un sell drugs / reduce demand among teens

Accomplishments

• The New York Times says:
  “One of the most effective drug education groups in the U.S.”
• Since mid-’80’s
  – Drug use in America has declined > 32%
Accomplishments

– Today: 7.4 million fewer drug users
– Teens’ overall substance abuse steadily declining
– Regular use of cocaine plummeted astonishing 72%

Research-Based

• All work grounded in quantitative and qualitative data & learning
  – Including Partnership Attitude Tracking Study
    • Highly respected data source
    • Now in 18th year

Allied With Corporations, Associations, Foundations, Government

• Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
• Takeda Pharmaceuticals
• Consumer Specialty Products Association/Alliance for Consumer Education
• Met Life Foundation
• Consumer Healthcare Products Association

Allied With Corporations, Associations, Foundations, Government

• White House Office of National Drug Control Policy
• National Clearinghouse for Alcohol & Drug Information
• Center for Substance Abuse Treatment
• Center for Substance Abuse Prevention

Allied With Corporations, Associations, Foundations, Government

• Major League Baseball
• Purdue Pharma
• Endo Pharmaceuticals
• Yahoo!
• Google
• Comcast Cable
• Cardinal Health
• Procter & Gamble Fund

Allied With Corporations, Associations, Foundations, Government

• U.S. Department of Justice
• U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency
• U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
• National Institute for Drug Abuse
• Treatment Research Institute
Percent of Students Reporting Past Month Use of Any Illicit Drug Has Decreased

An Immediate Need

- Parents with children at risk:
  - 33 million parents/caregivers with kids in grades 4-12 (ages 8-17)
  - 10,000 kids turn 13 every day
  - 13.4 is the average age of first drug use

- Parents with children who are experimenting
  - 12-15 million kids in grades 6-12 (ages 11-17) use alcohol and/or drugs each year

Medicine Abuse is Becoming “Normalized” in Teen Culture

1 in 3 teens report having a close friend who abuses Rx pain relievers to get high

1 in 4 teens report having a close friend who abuses cough medicine to get high

Piercing Parental Denial

- Dangerous convergence
- Vastly different drug scene
- What focus groups show

Generation Rx:
A Culture of Pharming Takes Root Among Teens
Trends in Substance Abuse -- 8th Graders

Recent Troubling Trends
- Methamphetamine (regional)
- Inhalants (inhaled fumes)
- Prescription drugs (pain relievers, tranquilizers, stimulants, sedatives)
- Over The Counter drugs (antitussives, CNS stimulants, antihistamines)

New Landscape of Substance Abuse
- Number of Teens Who Have Ever Tried: (in millions)
  - Marijuana: 8.6 million
  - Inhalants: 4.7 million
  - Prescription Medicines: 3.4 million
  - Cough Medicine: 2.4 million
  - Crack/Cocaine: 1.4 million
  - Ecstasy: 1.3 million
  - Meth: 1.2 million
  - LSD: 1.1 million
  - Heroin: 0.7 million
  - Ketamine: 0.1 million
  - GHB: 0.1 million

Teens Lifetime Trial

Get or Swipe From Friends or Relatives for Free
- Source of Rx pain relievers used nonmedically:
  - 59.8% from friend or relative for free
  - 16.8% from doctor
  - 4.3% from drug dealer or stranger
  - 0.8% bought on internet

“Pharming”
- Kids abusing Rx or OTC medicines to get high, reduce stress and pressure, perform better
New Resources

In Person

Online

Online Drug Abuse Encyclopedias

“One encyclopedia, Erowid, contains 20,000 documents that detail the practical aspects of drug use, including dosage, modes of administration, and intended effects. Its 250,000 daily page visits and 6 million annual unique visitors who seek information on >200 psychoactive substances attest to Erowid’s popularity and the perceived reliability of its information.”


No Prescription Needed

• 9 of 10 internet sites that sell controlled Rx drugs do not require prescriptions
  – 185 websites in 2006, up from 157 in 2005
  – 60% offered “online consultations”

Medicine Abuse Becoming “Normalized” in Teen Culture

1 in 3 teens report having a close friend who abuses Rx pain relievers to get high
1 in 4 teens report having a close friend who abuses cough medicine to get high

Every day 2,300 teens try a prescription medicine to get high for the first time

Parental Involvement Key to Drug Prevention

Kids who learn a lot about the risk of drugs from their parents are up to 50% less likely to use.
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<tr>
<th><strong>Need to Grow Parental Involvement</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Only 31% of teens “learn a lot about the risk of drugs” from their parents.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Parents Do NOT Understand Rx/OTC Medicine Abuse</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Do not think their teen is vulnerable to Rx/OTC abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Do not understand the behavior of intentionally abusing medicine to get high</td>
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<td>• Think that if their teen did abuse medicines it would not be as dangerous as “street drugs”</td>
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<th><strong>Good Medicine Meets Bad Behavior</strong></th>
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<th><strong>Strategic Communications Campaign</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Research tracking and evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• National and local consumer public relations</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Multi-media national and local public service advertising</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Web-based parent resources + brochures (English &amp; Spanish)</td>
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<td>• Interactive teen web-site</td>
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<td>• Outreach to physicians</td>
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<th><strong>Campaign Objective: Motivate and Equip Parents</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Educate parents about medications kids are abusing</td>
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<td>• Encourage communication with kids about risks</td>
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<td>• Safeguard medications at home (and ask your friends to do the same)</td>
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| **Public Service Advertising Examples** |
The scope of teen abuse of Rx and OTC medicines is large and evolving.

Unabated this abuse has far-reaching implications for health care and the costs to American society.
The disconnect between teens’ and parents’ attitudes and behavior is wide.

To reduce the scope and gap requires a long-term effort by many allies.

The Partnership for a Drug-Free America welcomes your interest and support. Thank you.

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828-242-7332

www.drugfree.org

Upcoming Programs

HIV/AIDS Update 2008
May 7, 2008
Wednesday, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Title X - Family Planning
Topic to be Announced
May 13, 2008
Tuesday, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.