

# PRESCRIPTION DRUG MISUSE AND YOUR HIGH SCHOOLER

**PRESCRIPTION DRUGS** are strong medications that **require a prescription** from a doctor or dentist. Doctors consider **a person's characteristics** (body weight, dosage, and allergic reactions) when prescribing a prescription drug.<sup>1</sup>



**MISUSE** of prescription drugs is using another person's medicine or taking medicine in a dose or manner other than prescribed, whether for legitimate medicinal concerns or to reach a high.<sup>2</sup>

**3** most misused drug classes<sup>1</sup>



In 2018, over **6.3 MILLION** 12 to 17-year-olds misused prescription drugs<sup>2</sup>



= **1 IN 4** of all youth in the United States



**13.2%** of all Tennessee high school students reported misusing prescription drugs in 2017.<sup>3</sup>



**12.5%**, or **15,000**, of all Tennessee high school students reported needing but not receiving treatment for substance abuse disorders in 2018.<sup>3</sup>



The rate of prescription drug overdose deaths for people under the age of 18 living in Tennessee increased by **28.6%** from 2014 to 2017.<sup>4</sup>

**PARENTS CAN PREVENT PRESCRIPTION DRUG MISUSE**



1. National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2019). Prescription Medicines. Retrieved April 10th, 2020.

2. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2019). Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States. Retrieved April 10th, 2020.

3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2018). High School YRBS Tennessee 2017 Results. Retrieved April 11th, 2020.

4. Tennessee Department of Health (2020). Tennessee's Annual Overdose Report 2020. Retrieved April 13th 2020.



**STEPS**

**TO**

**MINIMIZE**

**RISK**

**1. COMMUNICATE** openly and often with your high schooler about prescription drug misuse. Listen to, encourage, build trust with, and educate your child.

**2. MONITOR** prescription drugs within the home. Keep track of the number of prescriptions in your home, the number of pills in each bottle, and the number of refills.

**3. SECURE** prescription drugs in your home, so your teen does not have access. Keep medications in locations only you are aware of, preferably in a locked cabinet.

**4. DISPOSE** of any old or unwanted medicine safely by mixing it with unappealing substances such as dirt, kitty litter, or used coffee grounds in a sealable bag and throwing the mixture away in household trash. Take advantage of local drug take-back programs.

Teens who talk with their parents about prescription drugs are

**42%**

**LESS** likely to misuse prescription drugs.<sup>5</sup>

5. The Partnership. (2018). Partnership Attitude Tracking Study. Retrieved May 10th, 2020.

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