



R.A.D.A.R. Network Prevention Resource Center

September 2007
Volume 5, Issue 1

"Where Knowledge is Key to a Healthy and Drug-Free Environment"

What's New!

Abusing Over-the-Counter Drugs (DVD)



This program explores the most common abuses of OTC drugs and shows the chemical, biological and psychological damage that can result from abusing these ordinary drugs. The dangers of this kind of abuse are shared through the tragic story of Jennifer Darling, a high school student whose experimentation with DXM was a cause in her own death. Students will also hear a message from a district attorney describing the severe legal consequences teens can receive if found driving or committing a crime while under the influence of these substances.

(Summary from HRM website.)

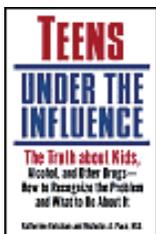


Getting High on Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs is Dangerous

The Partnership for a Drug-Free America puts out this booklet to inform parents of teenagers about the rising prevalence of OTC and Rx drug abuse. It thoroughly

explains commonly abused Rx and OTC drugs, and gives tips about how to talk to teens about their dangers.

Teens Under the Influence: The Truth About Kids, Alcohol, and Other Drugs—How To Recognize the Problem and What to Do About it (Book, 2003)



Across the United States, in small towns and major cities, in suburbs and slums, in public and private schools, thousands of kids are experimenting with drugs. Many of them will become addicts; some will die.

Knowledge is the key to defeating drug addictions, and that is what this comprehensive book provides. Full of candid true stories from adolescent drug users, with facts based on recent scientific research, *Teens Under the Influence* tells you exactly what you need to know to deal with your child's problem.

(Summary taken from book jacket.)

Call the PRC at
545-3228 x34 or
1-800-845-1946 x34
print materials and
mail-outs are FREE



HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
HEALTHY PEOPLE—HEALTHY COMMUNITIES—HEALTHY ISLANDS
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division
through Federal Substance Abuse Prevention
and Treatment Block Grant Funds



OTC & Rx Drugs on the Rise

By:
Alissa
Schneider

Illegal street drugs continue to be Hawaii's greatest threat according to law enforcement and current usage statistics. However when considering the dangers of Rx (prescription) and OTC (over-the-counter) drugs several questions need to be asked.

Question: Are illegal street drugs readily available on your local drug store shelf the way cold and cough medicines are?

Question: Are illegal street drugs commonly found in home medicine cabinets the way Rx and OTC drugs are?

Question: Can you order illegal street drugs through internet sites with little to no questions asked?

The availability of Rx and OTC drugs are their greatest threat to Hawaii youth and families. Youth are not carded when buying cold remedies, and getting high can just be a matter of opening the medicine cabinet.

OTC drugs

When used as directed OTC drugs are convenient and appropriately treat some ailments. The reason these drugs work is because they are powerful.

Unlike products with pseudoephedrine that were taken off shelves in 2006 to combat *ice* production, the active ingredient in OTC drugs commonly sought to get high is available in many medicines found on the shelf.

Drug Facts

Active ingredients (in e.)
Dextromethorphan HBr, USP 10 mg.
Guaifenesin, USP 200 mg.....

"Tuss" in the name contain DXM. It can be called *robo-tripping*, *skittling*, *DM*, *triple-c* or *red devils*. DXM causes disassociative and hallucinogenic feelings in those abusing it; some have compared the feeling to the effects of PCP or ketamine. Effects from DXM can sometimes last up to six hours and include fever and sweating, nausea, headache and other ill effects.

For all OTC abuse, essentially the user is overdosing on the substance in order to get high. This can mean drinking an entire bottle of cough syrup or taking an entire blister sheet of pills. What abusers of these substances may not realize is they are also OD-ing on all the other ingredients in the product. Commonly these medications will come with antihistamines, acetaminophen, chlorpheniramine and guaifenesin; side effects of OD-ing on some of these ingredients include vomiting, liver dam-

age, seizures and coma.

According to a study released in 2005 by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America approximately one in 11 teens have abused OTC products. Also, teens have tried cough syrup at the same rate as crack/cocaine, ecstasy and meth.

Rx Drugs

While Rx drugs are designed to be for specific individuals with a medical need, their abuse grows across the nation.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) young adult use of Rx drugs for non-medical reasons increased from 2002 to 2006, where other drug use rates dropped or stayed the same. Hawaii has only seen non-significant statistical rises in non-medical pain reliever use since 2004.



Individuals who abuse Rx drugs have a variety of ways to acquire the drugs. The internet is very popular and affords the individual a way to access off-shore or dodgy pharmacy operations who do not ask for prescriptions. Parents are encouraged to check internet histories and keep a watch on credit card charges. Teens, especially, can often look in medicine cabinets and take drugs prescribed to the adults of the household. People who are prescribed the drugs can also abuse that prescription, either for themselves or others.

The Rx drugs often abused include those for ADHD (stimulants), anxiety (sedatives) or pain (opioid based). The abuse of Rx pain drugs is especially dangerous because of their opioid base; other drugs with opioid bases include heroin, methadone, morphine and codeine. Experimentation with opioid based drugs, including Rx drugs, is more dangerous than experimentation with drugs like marijuana or alcohol due to the highly addictive nature of the drugs.

Rural communities sometimes see high abuse rates of Rx pain drugs due to the physically taxing nature of work done. When people are involved in work that results in injury or chronic pain, the availability of the Rx drugs goes up due to the legitimate demand from the community.

It is important for caregivers to be aware of this rising trend and educate themselves in order to better prepare youth against the risks involved with Rx and OTC drugs. Please check out the resources presented in this newsletter and drop by the Prevention Resource Center M-F from 8:30-5:00 for more information.

Campaigns and Initiatives

Five Moms

Five real life moms—a pediatric nurse practitioner, an accountant, a DARE officer, an educator and an author—come together to spread the word about cough medicine abuse by young people. This web-based campaign aims to educate parents and encourages those parents to spread the prevention message.

www.fivemoms.com



1



Ku I Ka Mana

Ku I Ka Mana Native Hawaiian Mentoring Program is a collaborative effort between Waimanalo Health Center, Waimanalo Elementary/Intermediate School, the Department of Health Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division, and other local Agencies. We have been in WE/IS for almost 10 years this year.



Our Program provides mentoring for middle school students in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade at Waimanalo Elementary/Intermediate School. Our goals are to promote healthy behaviors through culturally appropriate best practices. We educate students in Substance Abuse Prevention, Self Respect, Self Identity, Healthy Life Choices and Communication Skills. Our program is based upon respect for the Native Hawaiian Language, Cultural practices, values of mo'olelo (storytelling), kukakuka (talking story), kalele (to lean for support) and pono (to make right). We also provide in our pu'uhonua (a place of refuge) a healthy snack during recess and lunch break Monday thru Friday.

After school we partner up with the WE/IS "Uplinks" program and provide weekly after school activities and invite guest speakers. Throughout the week we have Career Day, Medical/ Health/ Aerobics, Drug and Alcohol Prevention Day and Hawaiiana Day.

We also do various community activities throughout the school year.

Our program opened its first three week summer 2007 program funded by the Okumura Foundation. It was a great success!



Upcoming Trainings

***Pūpūkahi I Holomua* "United to Move Forward": Harm Reduction Approaches to Tough Social Problems**

DATE: November 8-9, 2007; 8:30am—5:0pm
LOCATION: Hilton Waikiki Prince Kuhio Hotel
REGISTRATION FEE: \$125 before October 10, \$140 before November 2, \$150 on-site

For more information: 853-3280
home.hawaii.rr.com/pupukahi

CSAC credits available



For more information on courses offered and accredited by the Department of Health, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division (ADAD) please call (808) 692-7506, or visit their website: <http://www.state.hi.us/health/>

Newsletter published by the Coalition for a Drug-Free Hawaii

Web Links

www.doseofprevention.org

The materials found on this website address the recent trend among young people who are taking large amounts of over-the-counter cough medicines that contain dextromethorphan (sometimes abbreviated DXM) to get high. This information is designed to arm parents, educators, retailers, healthcare providers, law enforcement officials, and other community leaders with critical information to address the problem of cough medicine abuse.

www.rand.org/multi/dprc/

For over a decade, the RAND Drug Policy Research Center has conducted research to help community leaders and public officials develop more effective ways of dealing with drug problems. In doing so, the DPRC brings an objective, pragmatic perspective to this often emotional and fractious policy arena. The Center's goal is to provide a firm, empirical foundation on which sound policies can be built.

www.why21.org

As the nation's current debate on the 21 Minimum Drinking Age Law rages on, it's easy to mistake opinions as facts. Here is where you can get the straight truth on why the law is important to you—regardless of your age—and how it saves lives.

