

Video Viewing Guide and Reflection Questions

Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs

Overview

Over-the-counter (OTC) drugs such as sleeping aids and cold medicines are widely available in drug stores, although due to teen overdoses and hospitalizations, many states now require certain brands to be placed behind the pharmacy counter. Doctors legally prescribe prescription drugs such as painkillers, muscle relaxers, and ADHD medications to hundreds of thousands of patients – but teens are buying, selling and using them illegally to get high.

According to the Partnership for a Drug-Free America™, young people are more likely to abuse these legal drugs than they are any other drug except marijuana. You can hear some of these stories from teens who tell their true stories in the video Prescription and OTC Drug Abuse. You'll also hear from their parents and experts about what this trend means to the health and wellness of teens, and what parents, caregivers, counselors, teachers, and other adults can do to become more aware... and help stop the trend.

Reflection Questions

Watch the video first, then answer the questions below. You can also use the questions as conversation starters with other adults, or with students or kids.

1. In the introduction of the video, we hear that prescription drugs such as Ritalin, over the counter cold medicines, and inhalants are widely abused by young people. In fact, several teens talk about their drug use. How do kids get the drugs? Do you think they understand the dangers of taking them?
2. What about adults? Do you think most adults are aware that these drugs can be used to get high, and often cause dangerous health issues, hospitalization and even death?
3. Do you currently lock up these drugs in your household? If not, will you do so after watching the video and learning more about substance use on the website?
4. Marie, one of the young women in the video, says that she woke up naked next to one of the guys she had been partying with the night before. She said she had been raped. Jackson, another teen in the video, says that he realized his drug abuse was going to kill him, so he stopped. How can you use stories like these to teach about the consequences of harmful actions?
5. Several of the young people in the video talk about how kids abuse Ritalin, a medication prescribed to help people with ADHD. How do they describe what Ritalin (and other similar medications) does to someone who does not medically need it? What are the dangers?
6. What has been your experience with students selling their prescription medicines in school? What is your school's policy to both protect students from the dangers of this action and enforce rules against this?
7. Meghan, another of the teens in the video, says, "(Kids) don't really consider (cold medicine) a drug-drug." What does she mean? In your experience with students, is this true?
8. Most teenagers think that "bad things" won't happen to them. Why do teens consider themselves "indestructible"?
9. What is your biggest takeaway from this film? Why?