

2020-2021

Prescription & Over-The-Counter Drug Initiative

The Student Prevention Leadership Teams (SPLT) Prescription & Over-the-counter Drug Awareness Initiative was held virtually across 23 Monroe County Middle Schools and High Schools.

Information also reached over 1400 people on social media.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS ABUSE and MISUSE

Prescription drug misuse & abuse is when someone takes a medication inappropriately. For example, medications not taken as prescribed by your doctor or taking medications that are not prescribed to you by a doctor.

Prescription drug misuse & abuse is the fastest growing drug problem in the United States & it is profoundly affecting the lives of teenagers.

A common misperception is that prescription drugs are safer or less harmful to one's body than other kinds of drugs. However, there is a range of short and long-term health consequences for each type of prescription drug used inappropriately: Opioids, Depressants and Stimulants.

OPIOIDS
Act on the same parts of the brain as heroin, can cause drowsiness, nausea, constipation, & depending on the amount taken, slowed breathing. Opioids have a high risk of addiction.

DEPRESSANTS
Can cause slurred speech, shallow breathing, fatigue, drowsiness, lack of coordination, & requires upon withdrawal from chronic use. Depressants are habit-forming & users often become addicted.

STIMULANTS
Are highly addictive & have side effects in common with cocaine, & may include paranoia, dangerously high body temperatures, & an irregular heartbeat, especially if stimulants are taken in large doses or in ways other than prescribed.

PROPERLY DISPOSING OF MEDICATIONS

Do your part to help prescription drug abuse and misuse in our community by

Properly disposing of unused & unwanted prescription & over-the-counter medications helps to protect our community against prescription abuse, addiction, & accidental or intentional overdose.

There are 6 Red Med Box locations in Monroe County:

- City of Monroe Police Department
- Erie Township Police Station
- Michigan State Police - Monroe Post
- Village of Dundee Police Station
- Monroe County Sheriff Office Bedford Substation
- Village of Carleton Police Station

Red Med Boxes are an easy and secure way to dispose of your unused or expired medications.



ADDICTION What is it?

Addiction is an illness

- Addiction is a chronic illness just as heart disease & cancer are chronic illnesses.
- Addiction can be genetic.
- Addiction is not a weakness.
- Addiction does not mean someone is a bad person.
- People from all backgrounds can get an addiction.
- An addiction can happen to anyone and at any age.

People do not plan to get addicted to drugs

When people first take a drug, they may feel how it makes them feel and they believe they can control how much and how often they take the drug, but unfortunately, drugs can change the brain and can take away people's control.

Addiction is a Brain Disorder

- Drugs change how the brain works.
- Brain changes can last for a long time and cause problems with a person's behavior.
- Once a person is addicted, his or her brain changes so that drugs are now their top priority.
- Addiction takes over your life and taking drugs can become more important than things like eating and sleeping.

Not everyone who uses drugs will become addicted

Each person's body and brain react to drugs differently. Addiction can happen quickly or it can take time. Chances of addiction are much higher and can happen faster when a person starts using drugs at a young age.

DEPRESSANTS Getting down to the FACTS!

KNOW THE FACTS

DEPRESSANTS AFFECT THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM. They slow down the messages between the brain & the body that reduces stimulation. They do not necessarily make a person feel depressed but they can affect concentration & coordination which slows the person's ability to respond to situations. In large doses, they can cause weakness, vomiting, unconsciousness & even death.

PEOPLE WHO USE DEPRESSANTS REGULARLY CAN DEVELOP DEPENDENCE OR TOLERANCE TO THEM. Tolerance is when you need to take larger amounts to get the same effect. Dependence is when using the drug becomes more important than other activities in life. Dependence can be psychological, physical, or both.

EXAMPLES OF DEPRESSANTS INCLUDE: Alcohol, GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyrate), Anax, Valium, Xanax, Miltrex, Ultram & Phenergan.

DEPRESSANTS ARE ALSO KNOWN AS: Downers, Sleepers, Tranqs, Phenies, Red Pills, Yellow Pills & Benzos (Short for Benzodiazepines)

HOW ARE DEPRESSANTS USED?
Use depends on the specific type of depressant. For example, alcohol is drunk & benzodiazepines are usually swallowed but are sometimes injected and some depressants are inhaled.

ARE DEPRESSANTS DANGEROUS?
Use of depressants can become especially when taken in combination with alcohol or other drugs. The chemical composition of most drugs are highly variable, therefore it is easy to take too much & the difference between the amount needed to get high & the amount that causes an overdose can be difficult to judge.

CAN I OVERDOSE ON INHALANTS?
Yes, a person can overdose on inhalants. Many inhalants & aerosol sprays contain large amounts of chemicals with a lot of active ingredients, so using these products can cause the heart to stop when inhaled. This condition, known as sudden sniffing death.

THE BOTTOM LINE:
There is no safe level of drug use and drug abuse can be deadly. It's important to be careful when using any type of drug. Talk to your parents, doctor, a counselor, teacher, or another trusted adult if you have questions.

STIMULANTS Get up to Speed with THE FACTS!

KNOW THE FACTS

STIMULANTS CAN HAVE NEGATIVE EFFECTS. They are a class of drugs that speed up the messages between the brain and the body. They increase alertness, energy and attention, however, large doses of stimulants can cause "over-stimulation", causing anxiety, panic, seizures, heart attack and stroke.

STIMULANTS CAN BE ADDICTIVE. When prescribed by a doctor for a health condition, stimulants can be safe and effective. It is considered misuse when they are taken not as prescribed or when you take some that are prescribed for someone else.

EXAMPLES OF STIMULANTS INCLUDE: Adderall, Ritalin, Concerta, Risperidone, Dexamphetamine, cocaine, and cocaine.

STIMULANTS ARE ALSO KNOWN AS: Bunnies, Back Breakers, Crackers, Hearts, Jiff, LA, Turnaround, Mibs, & Bunk, Slings, Speed, Study Drugs, The Smart Drug, Coppers, and Vitamin K.

HOW ARE STIMULANTS USED?
Prescription stimulants come in tablets or capsules and are taken orally. When abused, stimulants are swallowed, injected or liquid form.

CAN STIMULANTS MAKE ME SMARTER?
No, prescription stimulants do not increase school performance for people who are not diagnosed with ADHD. Stimulants can affect sleep, which is vital for memory and learning.

I WAS DIAGNOSED WITH ADHD & HAVE A STIMULANT PRESCRIPTION. CAN I TAKE MORE THAN WHAT WAS PRESCRIBED BY MY DOCTOR ON DAYS THAT I FEEL LIKE I NEED MORE?
No. Taking more medication than prescribed can lead to increased risk of psychosis, loss of touch with reality, loss of heart attack, stroke and addiction.

THE BOTTOM LINE:
All stimulants, including prescription stimulants, can be addictive, dangerous and deadly. Talk to your parents, a doctor, a counselor, teacher or another trusted adult if you have questions.