

# WJUSD Teen BE SMART Fact Sheet

Knowing the Facts = SMART CHOICES

## Prescription Drugs

Teen abuse of prescription drugs is on the rise and, in fact, only weed is used more frequently by teens to get high. Actually, for 12-13 year olds, prescription drugs are the most abused drugs. Two reasons behind the rise in teen use include easy accessibility (they can be found in the home medicine cabinet) and the belief that prescription drugs are safer than "street" drugs. While it is true that if used correctly, prescription drugs are generally safe, when they are abused, they are **JUST AS DANGEROUS AS STREET DRUGS!!!** Don't believe the rumors about prescription drugs, **BE SMART** and get all of the facts. Remember it is up to you to make smart choices. Your health is truly in your hands.

### Definition of Prescription Drug Abuse

Prescription drugs are drugs that can't be bought over the counter. You need a doctor to prescribe them for you. Abuse of these drugs comes when they are taken in a way NOT prescribed by the doctor or are taken by someone other than for whom the prescription is written.

**MYTH:** Prescription Drugs are safe, because they were prescribed by a doctor and came from a pharmacy. Why would a doctor give you something that wasn't safe??

**FACT:** If a doctor prescribes a drug for **YOU**, it is safe to take it the way the doctor prescribed for you to take it. Taking someone else's medication, or taking your own in a way other than how it was prescribed is **UNSAFE**. If you're lucky, you won't be hurt badly, but if you're not, the consequences could be serious.



Think about it:

✧ If you are a 95 pound 14 year old girl with no pain who takes a pain killer from a 53 year old 250 pound man who has just had major surgery, you may be at risk for an overdose of the medication.

**MYTH:** You can't get addicted to prescription drugs

**FACT:** There are many categories of prescription drugs. Those most commonly abused are narcotic pain medicines (OxyContin, Vicodin, etc.) and depressants (Xanax, Valium, sleeping pills, etc.) and **these medicines are very addictive**.



Check this out:

Over the past ten years, the number of teens going into treatment for addiction to prescription pain relievers has increased by 300%

**MYTH:** SHARING MEDICINES WITH MY FRIENDS IS SAFE. IF IT DOESN'T HURT ME, IT WON'T HURT MY FRIEND.

**FACT:** WE ARE ALL DIFFERENT AND WE ALL RESPOND TO MEDICINES IN DIFFERENT WAYS. ONLY A DOCTOR HAS THE KNOWLEDGE (AND THE LICENSE) TO PRESCRIBE MEDICINES FOR AN INDIVIDUAL. DON'T RISK YOUR FRIEND'S HEALTH BY GIVING THEM A DRUG THAT MIGHT BE HARMFUL TO THEM.

